

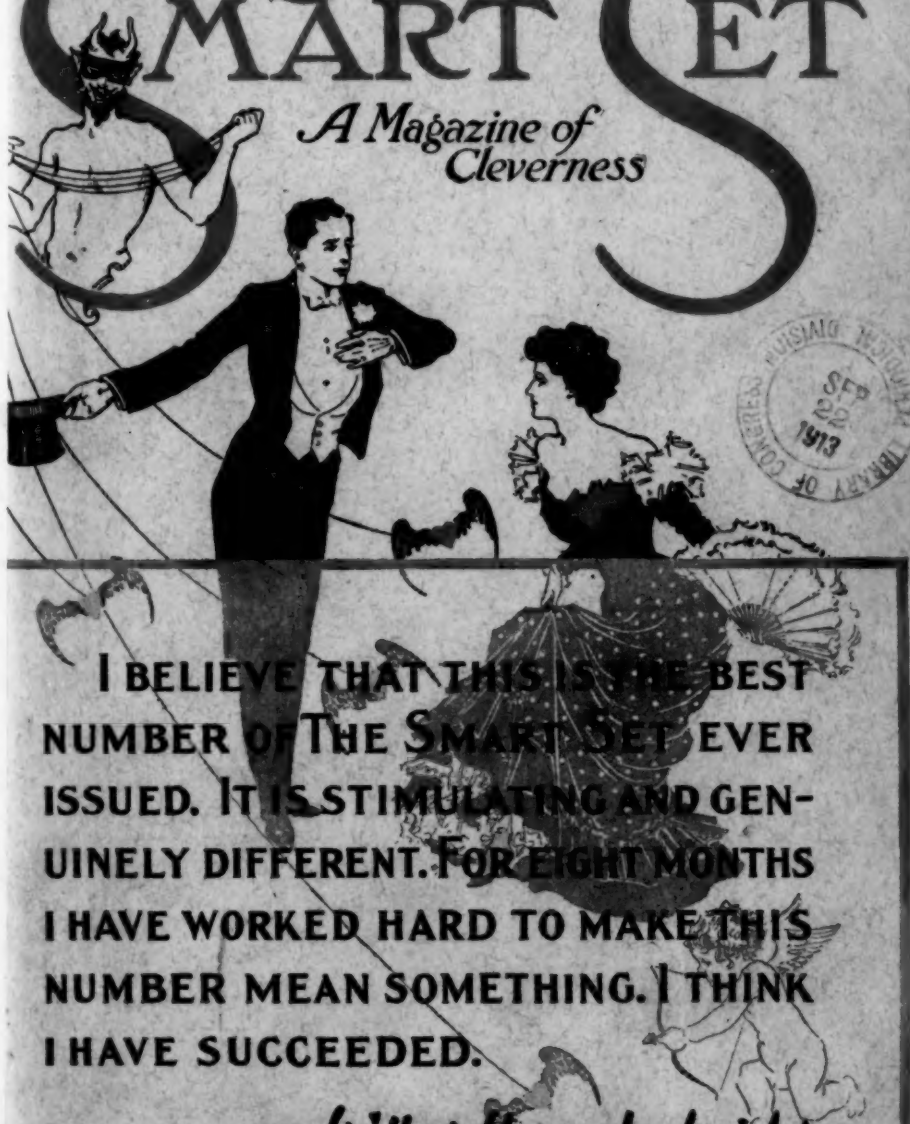
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*A Magazine of
Cleverness*



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Vol. XLI

OCTOBER, 1913

No. 2

THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF
CLEVERNESS

WILLARD HUNTINGTON WRIGHT, Editor

CONTENTS

THE WEDDING	Maarten Maartens	1
AFTER PARTING	Sara Teasdale	5
OCTOBER	Bias Carman	6
THE SIREN. Novelette	Charles Vale	7
FROM THE MEMOIRS OF A PROMINENT CITIZEN	George Bronson-Howard	51
KISSES IN THE TRAIN	D. H. Lawrence	62
PERTINENT AND IMPERTINENT	Owen Hatteras	63
TO CERTAIN POETS	Joyce Kilmer	68
A SHEPHERDESS OF FAUNS	F. Tennyson Jesse	69
"PHASELLUS ILLE"	Ezra Pound	80
THE AMERICAN: HIS FREEDOM	H. L. Mencken	81
FOR SALE	Albert Payson Terhune	89
THE DOTAGE OF DUNS SCOTUS	Donn Byrne	96
THE SUBMERGED THING	Harris Merton Lyon	97
RULES FOR AMERICAN DRAMATISTS	George Jean Nathan	102
THE NIGHT ROMANCE OF EUROPE: VIENNA	Willard Huntington Wright	103
HAGAR DECIDES	Daniel Carson Goodman	111
DESIDERIUM	Richard Le Gallienne	118
THE TEAR SQUEEZER	Barry Benefield	119
THE GIRL IN THE COFFIN. Play in One Act	Theodore Dreiser	127
LOVE	Skipwith Cannell	140
LE DAHLIA BLEU. In the Original French	Arthur Douriac	141
THE RAINBOW CHASER	Kenneth Rand	144
ON THE TRAIL OF A THOUSAND GIRLS	George Jean Nathan	145
"WITH YOUR KIND PERMISSION—"	H. L. Mencken	153

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THE SMART SET

The Magazine For Minds That Are Not Primitive

THE WEDDING

By Maarten Maartens

THE doctor turned to face the priest, in the storm of the fishing village street.

"Are you going?" asked the doctor, speaking loud.

"Of course I am going," replied the priest.

The fat doctor shrugged his shoulders. "Well, then I must go, too," said the doctor, annoyed. "You compel me. I am a very bad sailor. The boat is a cockleshell. The brat'll be there all right tomorrow. And the girl'll be well."

"Possibly," said the spare priest, gazing out into the fury of the rain-swept sea.

"And I shall be in bed," continued the doctor, following the other's gaze.

"They have signaled 'urgent' from the lighthouse," said the priest. "They daren't do that except in direst need! 'Urgent. Childbirth. Jane dying. Priest. Doctor.' Well, what would you have?"

"Fine weather," replied the doctor. For a far roll of thunder had died away on the horizon.

"What can I do?" persisted the priest. He added: "They signaled 'priest' first." And still more meditatively: "I am not a good sailor, either. You might stay. I can give some assistance. A priest has to know."

"A little knowledge is a dangerous

thing," said the doctor quickly. "I shall go."

"You were running in the right direction when I caught you up," said the priest.

"Yes," replied the fat doctor; "I can't run as fast as you."

But they both ran fast, with the wind behind them, breathlessly buffeting them on.

They reached the little jetty, where several dozen villagers had gathered, chiefly men and boys, attracted by the tidings the lighthouse had signaled just before the storm came on. Amazing tidings! Old Piet's daughter there, the lighthouse man's, dying in childbirth—the whole shameful secret flung suddenly, in a scarlet flare, across his scornful little world.

"Now, who is going to take us?" asked the priest. The doctor stood there, in his flapping Inverness cape, his instrument case, done up in oilskin, underneath his arm. The priest's black figure, with bent head, rose, a lank note of interrogation, upon the driving sand.

The group of huddled figures, a wildly irregular half-circle, remained silent, but for a grunt or two, in the wet wail of the wind.

"Is there danger?" demanded the doctor.

Old Chris replied—the right man to

give answer, a nose and whiskers like a sealion's; sixty years of herring fishery, and now six of repose:

"Danger? Of course there is danger. There's always danger, of a kind. Nobody minds the danger. It's the folly they mind."

A prolonged nod of assent slipped round the half-circle. A murmur. Not a face there, stilled to stolid resistance, but would fear, beyond every other peril, the risk of being called: "Fool!"

"You could get there, I suppose," explained Chris. "But you couldn't get in. You know you couldn't. Did you think you could?" He leered at the "gents." He spat out some dark tobacco. Others, here and there, spat. All leered, under their shimmery caps.

"I don't know; how should I?" answered the doctor hastily, anxious, in his turn, to escape from the dreaded epithet.

"If the wind drops," said the priest, "or veers round ever such a trifle to the south—we can land on the bank."

"If!" said old Chris. The slanting rain beat across the little crowd, in the wide mist of dunes and waters. The shiny oilskins gathered closer, away from the roar of shingle and surf.

"A thunderstorm can go as it came," said old Chris, "but you won't be able to land on the bank."

"I'll take you," said Rink. He stood out, in his black sea clothes, with the scarlet flannel undervest showing at the brown neck and wrists.

"You?" said the doctor. The priest said nothing.

"I. I've been a fool about her anyway. You've all heard that this morning. Live or die, she's dead to me, anyway. I sha'n't ask to speak to her—if I land you on the bank!"

"But—" blundered the doctor—"But—but the child isn't yours!"

Rink's damp face grew dark beneath the darkening heavens. The priest hastily interposed. "Yes, you take us," he said. His tone checked the grin that was breaking through upon the youngest faces there.

"No, the child's the red 'un's," said Rink Bossel, scowling. But the scowl was for the doctor. "There's no secret

now. There's a child coming yonder!" He pointed where, on the far sandbank, the lighthouse stood outlined, a pale black in the grim gray. "Old Piet himself, signaling, has told you—all."

"Needs must," said the priest. Said one of the men, a gnarled granduncle of Rink's: "Did you know?"

"I? Not I. But I knew she didn't care for me. Help me—some of you—with the boat." He ran to drag her from under her cover, by the rough woodwork of the little "head."

"There ought to be a lifeboat here, or a steam launch for the lighthouse," grumbled the doctor.

"There ought, but there isn't," said the priest. "Besides, the bay's safe enough. It's only this question of landing. And the urgency. The storm'll go down again as quickly as it came."

"Good-bye, and God bless you!" said old Chris. "You'll come back all right, but you won't get inside the lighthouse."

"Do you believe the Almighty can still the tempest?" demanded the priest. He endeavored to cling upright in the tossing boat; he fell forward.

"Can! Can!" called old Chris.

"He needn't," gasped the priest, righting himself, and rolling. "The least little turn of the wind to the south—" The priest caught at the second pair of oars. "I will get there,"—he nodded, his face illumined—"if I have to walk!"

"You might try. I'm too stout," said the cowering doctor. Upon the open ocean the roar of the wind was much louder than it had been by the low houses. The tawny expanse swayed around them, ruffled in ten thousand eddying masses of foam. Amongst the universal splash and spray the rain remained unnoticed, except for its sudden blotches in the face, like a blow. And the clouds seemed to brood across the waters, as if all heaven were breathing damp against the ocean's sullied glass. Someone had flung an oilskin into the boat, in starting; the priest put it on.

From the shore the little crowd stood watching. "He's a good 'un," said the granduncle, naturally not meaning the grandnephew.

"But they won't get into the light-house," said old Chris.

"So much the better, perhaps," remarked a younger man, "for Rink. Why should Rink go to meet the man that's stolen his sweetheart? The red 'un's there. He's been there these three months, as he was all last summer. Rink'd better keep out of his way!"

"Did any of *you* volunteer?" The granduncle turned on them, a wide snarl around his single tooth. They fell back. "Rink'd do for the stranger as he'd do for you, all of you! That's the sort that a woman turns round her thumb—like fools!"

"'Tis a fool's errand," said another; "that's why we didn't offer. They won't get in."

"They can try," said the granduncle. "Rink can try. She wants the doctor bad, or they'd never have signaled. Piet wouldn't. Not he!"

"It was clear, when they signaled," said somebody.

"The storm, for old Piet, was in the signaling. Telling you and me about his daughter! That! It must be life or death out yonder. That! And his daughter plighted to our Rink!"

Old Chris spat. "She'd better die," he said.

"Hush! They've sent for the priest," said the granduncle. With solemnized, softened countenances, all stood, heedless of the whirlwind, watching the boat.

"And now what do you call her, Rink?" questioned the priest, rowing. The young fisherman pretended, in the tumult, not to have heard.

The priest repeated his inquiry. "I like to know a boat's name," he remarked to the doctor, close beside him.

"Pah!" retorted the chilled doctor, who understood. "One saint's as good as another to pray to!"

"True," assented the priest.

"I calls her the *Pretty Jane*," blurted suddenly, with a violent jerk of his strong arms, the young fisherman in the bows.

"Our Lady were a worthier patron," said the priest.

"Isn't there a Saint Jane?" queried the doctor. Already the spent gale had

lulled: the hanging gray masses were breaking in vast vistas of dull silver. The swathed tower loomed, in gusts, over the fierce fret of the hidden bank. Only, the great slopes of green froth tossed and tumbled, like sliding hills in a convulsion. The boat strained and staggered; the rowers stooped to their oars.

"There is," gasped the priest. "And, besides, 'Joanna' means 'the gift of God.'"

The young man's swart cheek turned white, as he flung himself backward; and then, for a full moment, a red spot stood out in the middle of it. A rush of rain swept across them; a great cloud lifted from somewhere near the shrouded sun. "It is clearing already, somewhat," said the doctor. "Strange that I should not feel ill! In such a sea!"

"'Tis God Almighty's help," said the priest.

"Or thenervousstrain," said the doctor.

"'Tis no gift of God—no, damn it!" burst from the young fisherman's pent breast. "'Tis all her old father's doing! And my brute selfishness, 'cause I wanted to have her. She never wanted me. She wanted the red 'un! And she's dying of the regret and the shame!"

"And the sin," said the priest gently.

"She didn't want me, when she took me! And the red 'un night after night alone with them yonder in the light-house! But he's only a poor coastguard. And I've got a smack!"

"Now tell me truly," said the doctor, picking himself together, "did you know?"

Rink Bossel hung his head upon his oars. "I guessed," he said softly—they did not hear, only divined, him. "What does that matter? The whole village knows now."

After that they ceased even these much broken efforts at conversation, jerked out, repeated, at short and long intervals. The priest and the fisherman bent to their lightened task. The doctor shivered. They were within a few hundred yards of the lighthouse. The breakers leaped up around it. The sea swung to and fro.

"We shall get in all right, after all," said the doctor.

The fisherman glanced at the driving clouds. "We can't land for the next hour, at the least," he said.

"What!" cried both his companions.

"The wind's gone just a little bit north."

"You've prayed wrong," cried the doctor, "or your saint don't know right from left."

"Peace!" sternly said the priest.

"You can come away from it now," continued Rink, "but you can't get to it. Look at the 'suck' of the sand! And someone is coming away!" Even as he spoke, a black speck danced toward them. They swerved to meet it. The lighthouse, wreathed in rain wisps, showed suddenly, clear and grim, with the closed window, high aloft, and the railed gangway above it.

The *Pretty Jane* rested, throbbing, to leeward of the bank and the building. The waves ran up the front wall in ceaseless succession, rushing over each other with tumbles and crashes, thud upon thud of higher, and louder, downfall, in spray.

"By God, 'tis the red 'un," said Rink.

The boat came as near as it dared. The occupant wore some sort of uniform, with, even at this moment and distance, a certain air of smartness. He saluted.

"Well?" called the doctor.

"She's near done!" came the reply.

Rink mastered himself. He rose on his oars. "Can we get in?" he shouted.

"Don't you know you can't? Are you a seaman?" was the mocking retort.

"Yes, it's death," said the young fisherman, between his teeth.

"We must try," said the priest.

"I forbid it!" cried the doctor. "I won't have it!" He turned to Rink. "If you do, mind, it's murder," he said.

"We can't do it. Not for the next hour or two," said Rink.

The other boat had tossed closer. The wind frolicked around them, lifting and dropping its playthings on the untirable swing of the sea.

"She sent me, Your Reverence!" sputtered the coastguard. "She can't rest. She's dying. She won't let us wait. She

says she can't hold out an hour longer. She wants you to marry us—now—here—*marry*—at once! Before she dies!"

"What!" called back the priest.

The other had to repeat; he drove nearer than he durst. At imminent peril—the doctor screaming protest—he soared and sank within twenty yards of them; he shouted:

"I've the flag with me for 'yes.' I can signal: 'He'll do it!'" He shot a bottle to them, with a line. Rink succeeded in capturing it.

The priest read:

She says you must make an honest woman of her. She's here, behind the window. She says she'll die the moment the child is born. She is dying. I can see that. Oh, Your Reverence, we're broken-hearted. Help us—help, for God's sake!

The priest held the paper, reflecting. "Tis her mother's handwriting," he said. He looked at the doctor. "They want me to marry her to him," he said, with almost a smile of doubt. "Here, at once, *in extremis*. As the old Baron was married—you remember—on his deathbed, seven years ago."

"You can't do it. You mayn't. It's illegal," said the doctor, "before the civil marriage—"

"I know that," said the priest testily.

"Didn't they punish the priest in the Baron's case? The whole country rang with the row."

"Help us, for God's sake!" cried the man in the other boat.

"I'll do it—somehow," said the priest.

"Land me, Rink, somehow—get us into the house!"

"My God, don't you see the surf?" said Rink, righting his oars, his white forehead full of sweat and wet.

"We can get to her in an hour or two," called the priest.

"That's too late—or I shouldn't have come!" cried the guard.

"Help her, for God's sake—make an honest woman of her!" burst out Rink.

The priest staggered to his knees in the wide oilskins. "Signal 'yes!'" he exclaimed.

The two boats again drifted closer. "Signal 'yes!'" The red flag ran up. It fluttered crisply. At the lighthouse

window, clear of clouds now, waved a crimson response.

"She's alive! For they haven't drawn the curtain!" cried the guard.

The priest rose, as far as he could, half kneeling, in the stern of the boat. He stretched out one disengaged arm. With the other he held on for dear life. By a sudden impulse, the red 'un clawed off his cap.

"*Deus Israel conjungat vos!*" cried the priest. He cried it to the elements: the seething waste of waters, the opening and closing cloud mists, the unfathomable immensity of gray against gray. He cried it to his two human hearers: the discarded lover, the vexed physician. He cried it to the rough, red bridegroom yonder, in an attitude of vague devotion, with both arms on the restless oars. He cried it to the silent aperture, high up in the solid stone, a black square, flung wide open. The old man, Piet, hung by the casement; his wife hid behind him. They had pushed something white halfway forward—probably the bed—a dim vision, that might be a pillow. "She *would* have it open!" thought the red 'un, gazing. "It's—not so very cold. Well, he's begun!"

"*Deus Israel conjungat vos!*" The priest stammered and stumbled on. He steadied himself. His voice rang out, in swift formulas of sacramental benediction. Hurriedly, yet with no lack of

due dignity, rocked by the boat, in his wide oilskins, he sent forth the holy words on the solemn winds of heaven. The eyes of the man in the lighthouse boat were immovably riveted on the speaker's countenance. The priest's eyes barely swerved from the lofty window to the bridegroom tossing in the universal whirlpool, and back again to the waiting window, with the blurred shapes, undistinguishable, far away and near.

"In an hour we shall land. I shall get to her," muttered the doctor.

"I will get to her yet. I will absolve her," thought the priest. He argued against himself, not believing. He hurried on with his rain-swept service, in a sudden drizzle, endeavoring to ignore its fierce, its extravagant irregularity. He rang out his sentences of pity and pardon; the betrayed lover bent his head—the red 'un sat staring—the waters heaved.

". . . *Benedicat,*" said the priest. His eyes were lifted to the window. Some object—a gray bundle—was held up before it, for one swift instant—doubtless the newborn child.

The window flung to. The white curtain swept across it.

"*In sæcula!*" said the priest.

"It's no good, you know!" exclaimed the doctor. "The child's illegitimate!"

"*Sæculorum!*" said the priest.



AFTER PARTING

By Sara Teasdale

OH, I have sown my love so wide
That he will find it everywhere;
It will awake him in the night,
It will enfold him in the air.
I set my shadow in his sight
And I have winged it with desire,
That it may be a cloud by day
And in the night a shaft of fire.

OCTOBER

By Bliss Carman

ONCE I walked the world enchanted
Through the scented woods of Spring,
Hand in hand with Love, in rapture
Just to hear a bluebird sing.

Now the lonely winds of Autumn
Moan about my gusty eaves,
As I sit beside the fire
Listening to the flying leaves.

As the dying embers settle
And the twilight falls apace,
Through the gloom I see a vision
Full of ardor, full of grace.

When the Architect of Beauty
Breathed the lyric soul in man,
Lo, the being that He fashioned
Was of such a mould and plan.

Bravely through the deepening shadows
Moves that figure half divine,
With its tenderness of bearing,
With its dignity of line.

Eyes more wonderful than evening
With the new moon on the hill,
Mouth with traces of God's humor
In its corners lurking still.

Ah, she smiles, earth's tender-hearted;
Lays a hand upon my brow;
Rests this head upon Love's bosom!
Surely, it is April now!



HE—Oh, Judkin is a confirmed bachelor.
SHE—Yes? Who confirmed him?

THE SIREN

By Charles Vale

IT was nearly ten o'clock when Dr. Ward drove his car into the large, roughly paved yard, bounded, on two sides of the oblong, by stables and vast barns, memorials of the farmers who had formerly lived profitlessly in the decaying house. The night was cold and dark; the drizzle that had floated down clammy throughout the day had changed into a heavy, oppressive downpour; rivulets twisted through the interstices of the uneven stones, splashed from the gutters and spouts, or fell, broken into showers, from the low roofs of the disused pigsties.

He tooted the horn as he jumped from the car and Marple appeared from one of the barns, which had been modernized and fitted up as a garage. The doctor, with a nod, turned away; but paused after he had taken a few steps.

"Marple!"

"Sir?"

"I may be called out again tonight. If so, I shall want the car."

"Very well, sir."

The man looked at the somber sky, the weltering, desolate environment, and shrugged his shoulders. His master walked to the surgery, which had once been a kitchen. After carefully washing his hands, he passed through a small inner room, arranged as a private consulting room, and thence into the hall, where he hung up his overcoat and hat. In the light of the oil lamp that depended from the ceiling his face looked tired. That it was white was merely normal; but there were shadows of fatigue which gave an illusion of middle age to the clear outlines.

His housekeeper, Miss Sands, came from the dining room.

"Dinner is served, sir," she said jestingly, with the modulated voice of a gentlewoman.

"You have an extraordinary gift, Miss Sands," he returned gravely, "of anticipating my needs before I recognize them. I should not be at all astonished to discover that my slippers are waiting alluringly by the fire to welcome me; or that a chicken, delicately browned, has at this moment been placed on the table, precisely as if you had known within three minutes, instead of within three hours, when I should return."

They went into the room. The slippers, at a discreet distance from the glowing fire, had absorbed heat without undermining their constitution. Ward put them on, discarding his wet boots with satisfaction, and feeling already less fatigued. Miss Sands removed a cover, and the anticipated chickens, delicately browned, diffused a subtle and stimulating odor.

With a feeling of complete resignation to the physical necessities of the body, he sat down at the table. His habit was to dine, when he had no guests, in complete silence.

When he had finished, he looked toward Miss Sands, sitting across the room. She did not speak, and the silence within the cheerful room, lit by the glowing fire and the shaded lamps, was peculiarly soothing. His nerves, jarred by the anxieties of the day and the preceding night, recovered their normal tone; a sense of harmony, of complete accordance with the conditions of life, enveloped him. The sounds that obtruded themselves from without seemed irrelevant to the internal quietude. The patter and swirl of the rain, the sighing of

the rising wind, were apprehended aloofly, impersonally.

"You will be glad to know," he said at last, "that the operation was a great success—apparently. Of course it is a serious case, and complications may ensue—dangerous complications."

Miss Sands, gazing into the fire, murmured a commentary: "Poor Mrs. Harrington!"

Ward nodded. "She loves—the boy, —naturally. It would be a terrible thing—if—if anything happened."

"And you think—"

He threw the end of his cigar into the grate. "I am too tired to think. I am going to bed." He stood up. "By the way, if I am called in the night—"

Miss Sands, who had risen also, looked at him with an expression in which disquietude was succeeded almost instantly by resignation.

"And if I am not back by breakfast time in the morning, you will open my letters, and see whether there is one from Lord Daventry. I expect him—perhaps tomorrow; but he will, of course, send word, so that he may be met at the station. If so, let Marple take the dogcart and meet him. It will be fine in the morning, so an open trap will be all right."

Miss Sands turned suddenly, with a dull red flush in each cheek, and placed her hand on his arm.

"How do you know," she asked, "that your grandfather is coming tomorrow? Tell me. How do you know? Has he written already?"

Hesitating for a moment, Ward knitted his brows, and then answered, with a laugh: "Why, it's his usual time, isn't it? The dear old man doesn't show much ingenuity in varying his surprise visits."

Miss Sands considered the reply carefully, and accepted it. "But how do you know," she insisted, "that it will be fine tomorrow? Listen to the rain. It seems as if it would never stop."

"Yes," said Ward lightly, "and listen to the wind. Do you hear it rising? It will soon be a gale; and it is blowing from the northeast. I don't think there will be a vast amount of rain in the morning. Do you?"

She removed her hand from his arm. "No," she said slowly, "I don't—if you don't."

He was sleepy. The top of his head, down to the eyes, seemed curiously numbed. He said good night, and walked upstairs.

Miss Sands went into the hall, and brushed the Doctor's overcoat. Then, after placing a clean pair of boots by the side of the fire in the dining room, she also retired.

II

WARD folded his clothes and placed them on a chair by the side of the bed, together with a clean shirt, to which he transferred the links and studs from the one that he had removed. His watch he placed on a small hook near the speaking tube, which was arranged conveniently to his hand, as he lay in bed.

As he came upstairs, he had turned on the hot water in the bathroom, at the opposite end of the landing. The tub was nearly full by the time that he was ready, and he bathed luxuriously by candle light. The window frames rattled as the storm shook them. The house quivered with the sudden gusts. Though it was only the middle of February, the spirit of March seemed loose, hunting havoc. The oppression of a deliberate, demoniac will for ruin hung heavily upon the night; the sense of sheer purpose, of lust for the wreckage of life, was ominous and unescapable. He finished his bath and went to bed, leaving a night light burning.

The storm increased in violence. He listened dreamily. Floating images wavered before him, dim and then vivid: swift curves of faces revolved, mutable and mingling. A grotesque head expanded before him, thick-lipped and evil-eyed; abruptly, it was merged with lines of beauty. A girl's face, lovely and provocative, laughed, and receded. Then sleep blotted the illusion.

He dreamed fantastically of a white-haired, hook-nosed man, very old, riding whirlwinds on a malacca cane. The old man gibed, high in air, as he passed over houses and cottages, and looked straight down, for they were roofless, at the peo-

ple within. And he made bitter jests, calling out to them to waken, and lose no portion of the misery and mockery of life. Then, laughing shrilly, he flung down handfuls of frozen clouds, which broke into icy hail and pattered upon the floors of the roofless rooms, causing a continual tinkling, like the ringing of . . .

He sat up, conscious and alert. His electric bell was sounding. He stretched out his hand for the speaking tube at the side of the bed.

"Hello! . . . Yes. What is it, please? . . . What! Good God! I will be down in one minute, Mrs. Harrington."

He dressed swiftly and went downstairs, taking his overcoat and a cap as he passed through the hall. He stopped in the dining room to put on the boots that were waiting by the dying fire, and then, hurrying on through the surgery, turned the key.

He opened the door. A woman was waiting on the porch. He drew her inside.

"But this is madness, Mrs. Harrington," he said decisively. He did not close the inner door.

III

THE wind was still howling, but the rain had almost ceased.

In the glow of the red lamp that hung in the porch, the face of the woman was tinted, making less apparent the exhaustion buffeted into it by the storm and the fear that had called her out on a night so harsh. The delicate profile seemed shriveled by the stinging cold that had been flung furiously upon it; her clothes hung limp, wet and stained with mire; as she breathed unevenly, she quivered. Curiously, while Ward looked at her, a derelict from the darkness, a thought shaped itself which had not come to him before when he had seen her in the light and warmth of her house: "She has been a beautiful woman." It was almost like an actual voice.

He led her inside and gave her a chair.

"No," she said. "Walter—he—I was frightened—"

"Sit down," Ward said curtly. "How

did you get here?" he asked. "Who drove you?"

She looked at him, surprised at the question and the tone. "Where could I get a carriage?" she asked. "I walked, of course."

"From your house—here—in the darkness—on a night like this?"

"I had to come." She rose. "Dr. Ward, I—I think Walter is dying." She held out a hand beseechingly. "Please come. It took so long for me to get here, and I—I do not know what may have happened." Her head sank. "He may be dead."

She swayed. Ward pushed her gently into the chair again. "We will go at once," he said. He went out, buttoning his coat. In a little while she heard the whirring of the car, and he came in.

In a few seconds they were leaping through the mud of the uneven road. The wind, which she had faced when coming, was behind them now.

"Mrs. Harrington." Ward repeated the name before she realized that he had addressed her.

He saw that she was listening. "If somebody had to come, why not your husband?"

She looked at him appealingly. "He couldn't," she said.

"Why?" Ward demanded, swerving the car round a corner.

"He couldn't," she repeated. A sense of the paltriness and futility of concealment swept over her; loyalty was submerged by resentment, by sudden overwhelming antagonism directed against this man, her husband, who could not keep sober for one night while his only child was dying. "He—he—"

Ward caught her meaning. He could picture the scene—the lonely house, far from neighbors; the sickroom, the wearing anxiety, and suddenly the relapse which he had known was possible, though the boy seemed to be doing splendidly. He saw the sodden, helpless man—how in God's name had she drifted into marriage with this mere brute—a man, at his best, before decadence, utterly inferior? The mystery irked him. He glanced at her swiftly. It seemed strange to think

that that frail form had fought through the long miles, stumbling, running, deluged by the rain, but straining on again, frozen, gasping. An immense pity surged in him for the woman to whom such a tragedy was merely the appropriate sequel to sad days.

Far to the right he could see now the glow of the great Hurst ironworks. The furnaces belched flames, flaring beacons in the darkness.

He took the last turn. The house, dimly lit, became visible. Mrs. Harrington was silent as he stopped the car and helped her to get out.

"It is all right," he said assuringly. "You have not had your journey in vain. Don't be afraid. We will pull him through together, you and—" He stopped abruptly. A shadow seemed to float through his head. He remembered that he had slept for only three hours, and that there were arrears from other nights.

"I will do my best," he said.

He took his bag and followed her into the house. Taking off his overcoat and cap, he went upstairs. As he passed a door on the landing, he could hear the stertorous breathing of the drunkard. Before he would enter the sickroom, he insisted that Mrs. Harrington leave him and put on dry clothes. On the nurse's assurance that her boy was no worse, she went. Ward commenced his task.

IV

Just before dawn, the boy died.

Ward had fought for him with the skill and devotion that scarcely excite comment in this generation of miracles, because they are so usual. Yet he had realized, with the absolute finality which seemed to characterize many of his impressions, that defeat was inevitable. He alleviated the suffering; that, at least, was within his power.

When it was over his mother kissed him, and then, kneeling for a little while, tried to pray. The nurse knelt with her; of the two, she was the less composed. Ward went out of the room; it seemed better for him not to stay. Suddenly he

remembered the boy's father. He went to the door which he had passed as he came in, when the heavy breathing of the drunkard came to him nauseatingly. Turning the knob, he entered. The man lay on his bed, fully clothed; the blood vessels of his face were distended; his cheeks were purple; his creased neck red. Ward shook him, deliberately; compelled him to waken; dragged him from his stupor to a miserable awareness of existence.

He put a pillow under the man's head and forced him to sit up. "Can you hear me?" he said. Waiting for an answer, he shook him again. "Your son is dead," he said. "Dead. Do you understand? Walter is dead. He died while you were drunk." He could have struck him, but he turned away and left the room. The drunkard's gaze followed him, half vacuously, half comprehending.

He went downstairs and put on his overcoat; then, remembering his bag, returned reluctantly to the room where the dead boy lay. He was glad to see the perfectly normal expression of the face. Mrs. Harrington came out with him when he had collected his appliances. It occurred to him that he had never seen anyone so calm in corresponding conditions.

They went downstairs together. She had put on a simple white dress. Her figure was slight, almost girlish, and her manner had ease and distinction.

Ward was struck by her appearance. More acutely he marveled at her choice of a husband, at the destiny which had brought her to an obscure home, among toilers, in a place sacrificed to the unloveliness of large industries. He imagined that she had had many suitors, that her selection could have been made in a class far different from the one with which she had identified herself. She had breeding, unmistakably; the subtle stamp of caste had not been effaced.

She looked into his eyes. In hers was the appeal sometimes seen in those of children orphaned from infancy: the pain of loneliness, imperfectly understood, the groping toward a solution of the enigma.

"He was a good boy," she said at last. "Upright, straight-limbed, clean-hearted. I do not understand why he is dead." She stood quite still. "I am a Christian, Dr. Ward. I have tried to live according to the teachings of my religion. I have tried to help my boy, so that he would have ideals and reverence and simplicity. It seemed that that was my task, the end for which I was born, to which all my hopes and fears and natural strivings tended inevitably from the beginning. I cannot understand why he is dead. It seems so—so arbitrary, or careless. Why has God erased him, as if he were a mistake, a triviality?"

"It is difficult to understand," Ward said simply. "I wish I could help you, Mrs. Harrington. I know there is a reason; there must be."

"It seems unjust," she said. She sat down. "Forgive me. I have no right to distress you. You have been very, very kind. You have done so much for me, and for Walter. But he is dead. It is finished."

Ward did not know what to say. There was silence for a little while. Then—grotesquely, incongruously, horribly—the sound of heavy, clumsy footsteps came to him, as a gross body lowered itself from step to step of the creaking stairs. They waited, looking toward the door. The suspense seemed intolerable.

Harrington lurched in. The purple had gone from his face, the raw redness from his creased neck. His eyes, blood-shot, were fixed in a disquieting stare. Slowly he moved them; perceived his wife and Ward; watched them, evidently ill at ease.

"What's this about Walter?" he asked. He clutched a chair and moved it slowly with him, as he came nearer.

Mrs. Harrington closed her eyes. "Tell him, please," she said.

Ward took a step toward the paranoiac. "Walter—is dead," he said, in a low voice.

"Aye?" said Harrington. "So?" He stood for a moment, breathing noisily; then turned and walked, swaying, out of the room. They heard again his heavy footsteps as he mounted the stairs.

The tension had been extreme. As the sounds receded and ceased, the strained nerves relaxed abruptly. Mrs. Harrington even smiled; it was a spasm of pain, curiously distorted.

"You must get some sleep," Ward said. "When you wake, you will be yourself again. There is one other thing. You ought to have somebody with you—somebody whom you know well and can trust—a relative, perhaps. Is there anyone whom you could ask to come? Think."

She obeyed him like a child, puckering her brows. "There is my sister," she said at last. "I have not seen her for a long time, but she would come."

He took out his notebook. "Her name and address, please—I will telegraph to her."

She crossed to a small table and picked up an unsealed letter. "I had written to her," she said, "before—Walter was worse. I need not send the letter now." She drew out the sheet of paper and gave him the envelope. "That is the address."

He put the envelope in his pocket. "You will go to bed now?" he asked.

"Yes." She had recovered her composure. "Thank you for all your kindness."

He held her hand for a moment. His pity for her overflowed the ordinary barriers of restraint. Bending his head, he touched her hand with his lips. Afterward, the incident seemed stilted and sentimental. At the time, it was almost involuntary—an act of homage to a woman who had knelt at the shrines of loveliness and sorrow, and given gifts.

V

It was nearly two hours after sunrise when Ward started away from the solitary house. He did not retrace the course that he had followed on the journey out, but turned into Newchurch, where there was a branch post office, and wrote out a telegram asking Mrs. Harrington's sister to come to her without delay. When he had finished, he drew out the envelope that had been

given to him, to transcribe the address. He read, with some astonishment: "Lady Winter, Hyde Park Hotel, London, W."

About halfway home he overtook a girl who was walking. He glanced with approval at her thin, grave face and lithe figure.

"Good morning, Miss Heath," he called, stopping the car. "Let me give you a lift."

He watched her for a moment after she had made him stop and let her down. This was her daily task—to walk five miles to Hanford, give music lessons for a pittance, and tramp back again. Generally, she had her violin with her. The dreariness that limits so many lives appalled him.

"Miss Sands!" he called, as he went into the house after putting the car away.

She came out.

"Marple?" he asked, briefly.

"He has gone to the station," she answered.

Ward nodded, as if checking off an item that had been dealt with, and started upstairs. "There was a letter from my grandfather?"

"Lord Daventry wrote that he would come by the early train." She looked at him curiously. "As you anticipated," she added.

VI

An hour later he came down, shaved and refreshed.

He went into his study to read his letters. Seated in an easy chair was an old man, hook-nosed, almost hairless; the shape of the head was distinctly aquiline. His eyes were gray-green, and curiously noticeable. His hands, very white, were clasped together, and he was gazing into the heart of the fire, with his thin lips curved into a smile that was almost a sneer. He looked round as Ward entered, and then rose, showing a figure slightly under medium height, though the general impression of shrinkage made it seem less.

"Good morning, Saint John," he

said, in a voice unusually high but not unpleasant.

Ward shook hands. "I am glad to see you," he said gravely. "I have been looking forward to your visit."

"Not a bit," the old man retorted.

"Lies, mere lies—conventional and pardonable, but still mere lies. Why don't you tell the truth? Why don't you tell me I'm a nuisance, an incubus, an old man of the sea? Eh? Well, never mind." He sat down again. "So Your Saintship has been out all night?" He glanced at the pale, resolute face, which showed so few signs of weariness. "Soothing anguish, bringing comfort to the afflicted, and generally playing the part of a little tin god? Eh? You medical people always remind me of the devil. He operates through our passions. You operate wherever you can."

Ward opened his letters. "I haven't the honor of his acquaintance," he said cheerfully.

"At present," the old man snapped. "But you'll soon meet him. We Wards always do. We get very chummy. There's some peculiarity in our blood that makes us value his friendship. He knows so many pretty women. Perhaps that's the reason." He stared into the fire. "If every woman were as ugly as sin, there wouldn't be many divorces."

"Or many marriages, probably," Ward put in.

"A man doesn't marry a woman because she's pretty nowadays," Lord Daventry said. "He marries her because she has a pretty way with her. It's curious that single women should always have a double charm for married men, and married women for bachelors. It shows the power of knowledge. Unmarried women don't know what a married man does, and married women know what a bachelor doesn't—in theory. Eh? All attraction is based on ignorance—on one side, at least."

Ward finished his letters, and wrote a brief note as the sinister old man prattled on.

"I must go out now," he said. "Would you care to come with me?"

Lord Daventry suppressed an epi-

gram. "I shall be delighted to resume acquaintance with your patients—if any of last year's crop survive. By the way, how is time dealing with its little Sands? The admirable woman seems to have aged, John; though that is possibly a reflection from my own too obvious condition."

"Miss Sands does not seem to me to have grown older," Ward said. "She is one of the people whom time never catches unprepared."

"You have infected her with your vices," rejoined the old man. "It is a terrible thing to be immaculate."

At eleven o'clock, they drove out in the dogcart, Marple behind. Lord Daventry noted with approval the clean, well-cared-for trap, the polished harness, the shining silver. Ward was dressed in light gray, with a soft felt hat to correspond. His grandfather, frock-coated, silk-hatted, very precise, sneered contemptently at the surroundings.

"Arcadia," he observed, sniffing. "Arcadia—but in a raw state. Very raw. In a few generations after your death the neighborhood will begin to be habitable. The thought must be peculiarly exhilarating to you. I begin to understand why, with your temperament and traditions, you have chosen this environment. You are looking forward to the future. You have youth and hope—admirable lenses for a time telescope. They reflect what you wish to see. We blasé people have to be contented with the opera glasses of age and the artificial light of experience; and what we see is sometimes a rather painful reflection of our wishes."

They were passing the parish church, with its records of the dead—crosses and slabs of stone, some timeworn, defaced and slanting, others still erect and uncorroded; here and there pretentious granite still proclaimed the little pride of wealth. One large vault, iron-railed and massive, loomed somberly, the monarch of those mute memorials.

The old man pointed. "All the distinctions of caste," he said, "above; but very little distinction underneath."

They drove to the vicarage. The Vicar himself was in the garden, play-

ing laboriously with a rake. Age sat heavily upon his heavy frame. His scanty hair was almost white; his beard, unusually long and full, had patriarchal implications. He stooped as he walked. In his melancholy eyes the ashes of enthusiasm barely smoldered. His large hand quivered as he held it out; his voice was cavernous, his manner mystical. He welcomed them gravely.

"A rather unusual visit, Dr. Ward," he said. "A rather unusual visit. Fortunately"—he softened the unintended suggestion—"I mean, of course, that my robust health makes it unnecessary for me to ask for your aid professionally. I have much to be thankful for. Much to be thankful for."

Lord Daventry grinned at the ambiguity.

The Vicar was puzzled. "Your friend—" he suggested, glancing at Ward. "I seem to recall his features—and yet—"

"You have met Lord Daventry before, Mr. Thorpe," Ward said. "Surely you remember him?"

The Vicar smiled. "Of course. Of course. How do you do, sir? I am glad to renew our acquaintance."

"Really, Thorpe, you make me feel young," Lord Daventry said. "I still remember myself with perfect clearness, even after the lapse of so many years. Yet you forget me in a few months."

"I have much to think of," the patriarch explained. "Much to think of. You will excuse me. But I grow forgetful, I know. Strangely forgetful." He gazed placidly through the green-gray eyes and eagle face. "I should surely have remembered your pleasant humor and kindly interest in the affairs of my parish. You have come at a good time, Lord Daventry. A good time. We are to have a little gathering in a few days, just a village function—in connection with the church, of course; an evening of simple and innocent entertainment. You will be glad to be with us, I know, for I remember now, quite clearly, your keen interest in human nature of all grades. I wonder, if I could count upon you for some small item to enliven the evening—"

a brief address, an account of a few of your varied experiences?"

"I fear," Lord Daventry observed, "that they would scarcely be appropriate. I would rather not be a performer, Thorpe; but as a spectator I shall enjoy myself."

Ward intervened, touching abruptly a tragic note. "Mr. Thorpe, I want you to go over to Clayfield to see Mrs. Harrington. Her boy died this morning, and she needs your help."

"Dead?" said the Vicar. "Walter dead?" He stood for a moment, deliberating. "He was a bright, brave boy. A bright, brave boy. Sad that the flowers should perish before the withered leaves! Poor woman! I will certainly go to her. I will go at once."

He looked at Lord Daventry, wanly. "You and I, we stay," he said. "We stay, with our sluggish blood and shriveled force and bitter memories. And the young and glad-hearted die. The loved, the promising, are taken; the useless remain. Strange. Strange."

"Forgive me if I object to being classified as useless," Lord Daventry observed. "A mere prejudice on my part, no doubt; but I cling to it. No member of the House of Lords can be useless; he is always invaluable as a subject for political abuse." He surveyed the Vicar dispassionately. "You are certainly aging, Thorpe. You are losing your sense of proportion. I should not be at all astonished to hear before long that you had seceded to the Catholics."

The Vicar stiffened. "I cannot very well secede to a church of which I am already a member," he said, with dignity. "Already a member. Possibly you refer to the Italian or Roman Church. I have noticed that confusion still exists amongst the more ignorant laity. The more ignorant laity. I will wish you good morning." He bowed, and moved slowly away.

Ward smiled. "He scored against you there," he said to his grandfather.

The old man did not seem disturbed. "Certainly," he admitted. "'Ignorant laity' was good. Thorpe isn't so harmless as he looks."

A long drive ensued, through scattered villages and hamlets, over rough, circuitous roads. The air was tainted with smoke and mist, drifting heavily from the collieries and ironworks in the distance. Everywhere unloveliness met them. Little houses, cheap and new, flaunted their ugliness in the drab setting of older buildings, slovenly or decayed. Yet the shining sun lit up vistas of a gayer world beyond, of smoother roads, hedged fields and infrequent mansions of the rich; winding avenues could be seen, soft lawns and little gleaming lakes. Here and there they found relics of the fury of the storm: a fallen tree, tiles blown from roofs, timber ripped from the rough wooden shelters for cattle.

It was a long way round: every patient represented, on an average, about two miles. Lord Daventry took a keen interest in each visit, went in with his grandson, conversed with the humble. Several times, to his gratification, he was remembered. He was gracious on these occasions; he exerted himself to please, and left behind an impression of affability, which became in due time a legend. But on the way back he scoffed and giped as before, sneered at the lowly lives of these outworn toilers, made a jest of their patience and necessities.

As they swung into the lane that led directly home, they encountered Alice Heath, returning from Hanford. She smiled shyly as Ward saluted her.

"You sometimes wonder," Ward said, "why I have chosen this environment, and remain in it. That is one of the reasons."

Lord Daventry was slightly ruffled. "I trust," he said, "that you are not contemplating the imbecility of a *mésalliance*."

"I was thinking of courage, not marriage," Ward said. "She represents the quiet, uncomplaining heroism that is rather prevalent in this neighborhood. You look only at the darkness. To me, it is transfigured by the loveliness of some of the lives that it has molded. That girl, for example, with her grave, thin face, is always beautiful in my thoughts. Fate has not been very

kind to her. The only gifts she has known have been those of loneliness and poverty. I have never heard her complain. She lives with her sister in a little cottage. They both work hard. Day follows day. Routine repeats itself. They become older. *Voilà!*"

"A natural process," Lord Daventry observed. "Had you told me that they became younger, you would have interested me. I begin to believe that youth is really the wonderful thing that poets have proclaimed. It is a pity that one cannot be young without being youthful. If one could only commence again, innocent but wise, how delightful would be the pursuit of pleasure!"

They drove into the wide yard. It was already late in the afternoon, and the growing breeze struck bleakly in their faces. They were glad to get indoors to the cheerful fire and the lunch that Miss Sands had prepared.

The Curate called in the evening, and remained for dinner. The Reverend Cecil Hubert Morrison was under thirty, slightly built, agile and springy in his movements, alert mentally. Ward liked him, admired his genuineness, trusted the promise of his clear blue eyes. He had heard him preach, seen him sway simple people with simple words and the force of sincerity. To Lord Daventry he was a novelty, imported since the previous visit. He surveyed him with the air of an epicure preparing to carve a new trifle, insubstantial yet with possibilities.

While they smoked their cigars, the old man became almost genial. He suggested parochial topics, and listened with interest. His manner was soothing, and Morrison, gratified, chatted at ease, covering a wide range. When he rose to go, Lord Daventry thanked him.

"I now comprehend local conditions," he said. "I have rarely heard scandal so delicately and yet so exhaustively treated. Collating your information with all that I have been able to glean during the day, I think I can resume the entertainment where it was interrupted by the conclusion of my last visit. It is delightful to feel that one is not an outsider, that one enjoys a peculiar

intimacy with the secret history of these primitive people."

Morrison turned to Ward. "By the way, old man, with regard to the Harringtons—sad, isn't it? The Vicar told me he had been over to Clayfield. He has asked me to make the arrangements for the funeral. Old Harrington, he tells me, was like a man in a trance. He didn't go to the ironworks today. He hasn't been for several days, I believe, and he's pretty sure to lose his job unless he alters altogether. The Vicar says he wasn't drunk, though he'd evidently been not long before. But he seemed dazed. It makes it very hard for Mrs. Harrington. She oughtn't to be alone."

"I sent a wire for her this morning, to her sister, asking her to come," Ward said.

"You think of everything," said Morrison gratefully. "Well, I must be off. Good night, Lord Daventry. If there is any additional information that I can dig out for you, don't hesitate to let me know."

The old man bowed gravely. "You have evidently a great career before you, Mr. Morrison. Do not sacrifice it by allowing yourself to become a bishop prematurely."

Pondering this cryptic utterance, the Curate took his departure.

VII

THE days passed; Ward was busy, for the changing weather, the alternation of sunshine and extreme cold, manufactured many patients.

Lord Daventry inhabited the large house comprehensively. It had seemed rather desolate during the winter: there were many vacant rooms—some altogether empty, some furnished very simply for possible visitors. Now cynicism pervaded the air. The house reeked with pungent epigrams.

The night of the social gathering arrived. Lord Daventry had looked forward to it with malicious interest; weary of the poverty of the rich, he desired, he said, to examine the treas-

ures of the poor. Their simple-heartedness and natural ways would invigorate him. He was disgusted with the shallowness of his own class, which lived habitually on the surface of thought and emotion. These toilers would provide fuel for the fires of inspiration.

He stretched out a lean, white hand and gazed at it meditatively. "I can remember," he said, "when this hand would tremble as it clasped frail fingers. It clasped so many that the thrill soon wore away; but it still trembles. Age is absurd in its mimicry of youth. Cold and heat can both produce quivering. But there is a difference. You, my own Saint John, have probably not noticed it. The devil is scarcely ingenious enough to attract your interest. The temptations that have sufficed for so many dear, damned souls, are flung in vain against your adamant indifference. It is a wonderful thing to possess your acute interest in women—as pathological curiosities. You have dissected the sex too literally. It is a pity. One should always leave a little to the imagination. Eh? Without imagination, *liaisons* would be impossible. No one could fall in love with reality. That, by the way, is why women are never natural. They disguise themselves by appearing charming."

"One should never disregard an incognito," Ward said; and continued: "I have told Marple to bring the car round in half an hour. He will drive you to Newchurch with Miss Sands. I have a case at Chayle. I'll walk over and join you later, as the night is so fine."

When Lord Daventry arrived at the door of the large schoolroom, that had been transformed into a hall of subdued splendor, Balding, churchwarden and master of ceremonies, escorted him and Miss Sands to the far end of the room, where the Vicar welcomed them.

Lord Daventry surveyed the different types of faces—the dull, the bright, the sad, the illuminated. The influence of heredity and circumstance was written plainly in the imperfect molding of many features. Privation, patience, long endurance were stamped indelibly on some;

on others, coarseness, shallowness, unruled lusts and stunted mental growth. Yet there were some pleasant faces.

Balding after a while approached his distinguished visitor; hoped that he was enjoying himself; wondered, diffidently, if His Lordship could not see his way to contribute to the program. A few words, on any topic, would be considered memorable. Lord Daventry hesitated, and then, moved by curiosity as to what he would say, and the nature of its reception by these simple people, consented to address them.

The old man meditated. He had committed himself. What should be his subject?

Morrison came to them, and then conferred with the Vicar. The patriarch rose, and explained that Lord Daventry had consented to talk to them informally about the United States, which he had twice visited.

Lord Daventry mounted the low platform, and smiled slightly.

"I do not remember," he said, "the first time that I went to America. I was too young, fortunately, to retain any vivid impressions. I was then two years old—an age which could not possibly inspire anything but disgust in the mind of any reasonable adult. Of my second visit, which occurred recently, I retain equally hazy impressions. We arrived in a fog, and left in a fog. It was very gratifying to find that English industries had so wide a vogue."

He surveyed his audience with leisurely inquisitiveness, and perceived row after row of attentive but perplexed faces. He had made a false start. Adapting himself to his environment, he began, in a quiet, conversational manner, to give a simple account of the most obvious features of the great republic beyond the seas. Toward the end, he relapsed into his usual caustic style; sneered at the enormous skyscrapers and the enormous fortunes that dominated the landscape and the land; flung out a gibe at New York as a "city of ill bred aliens, posing as Americans without knowing what Americanism means," and concluded with a display of epigrammatic fireworks. The

audience, relieved from strain, began to applaud perfunctorily.

The street was almost deserted as they left the hall and walked to the garage at the inn. Thirty yards from the inn two roads converged and a primitive lamppost illuminated a small circle. As they came near, Ward noticed a woman, walking unsteadily. Over her shoulders and head was an old shawl. The Vicar also saw her, and hesitated.

"Poor thing!" he said. "Poor thing! I really ought to speak to her."

He turned aside. The woman stopped as he reached her, and gazed into his face, then laughed, wildly and horribly.

"You!" she cried. "You! Christ A'mighty! D'ye want to preach to me? You!"

"Yes, Nancy, I," the Vicar said sadly. "Why won't you let me help you to make an effort to lift yourself from this degradation and sin?"

"Sin!" she cried, and began to curse him foully. The Vicar bowed his head, as men do when they face a storm. Ward, who had come to them at the sound of the woman's voice, could see that he was praying.

"For shame, Nancy!" the Doctor said. "You are cold and tired; why don't you go home, like a sensible girl, and get to bed?"

The woman looked at him, and laughed. "Sensible!" she repeated. "Sensible! Never mind. I'll go. I know I'm drunk. I'm always drunk, glory be! Good night, Doctor dear."

She turned away, and left them, beginning to sing after she had taken a few unsure steps. Her quivering voice rose and fell, like the audible shuddering of a lost soul.

"The wages of sin," said the Vicar. "The wages of sin. And she was such a bonny lass in the years gone by. Such a bonny lass. And now, a drunkard, and worse than a drunkard: a shamed woman, unashamed. And what shall be done to the man who brought this to pass? What shall be done to him, and to his kind? Surely they shall go into the hell that they have purchased. Verily, verily, I say unto you, they shall by no means come out thence

till they have paid the uttermost farthing."

He stood as if unconscious of Ward's presence.

"Come," said Ward quietly. "The others are waiting."

"The uttermost farthing," the Vicar repeated.

Ward took his arm. They rejoined the others, and went on to the inn.

They left the Vicar at his gate and went home in silence.

VIII

LORD DAVENTRY was irritable at breakfast. "I don't know why I went to your idiotic meeting," he said.

"You are troubled," Ward said, "by the idea that the people did not appreciate your—humor? You are quite right. They didn't."

Miss Sands came into the room. "A letter from the Vicar," she said to Ward. "It has just come. I thought you would like to have it at once, as it may be important."

"You will excuse me?" Ward asked, opening the letter. He read it carefully, then placed it on the table.

"The Vicar tells me," he said, "that he has just heard from his son, in Colorado."

"Thorpe has taken the trouble to write to you about such a detail as that?" Lord Daventry inquired, incredulously.

Ward nodded. "It is seven years since Harold Thorpe left England. This is the first letter that he has written to his father during the last five of them. It is scarcely a detail, you perceive; it is an event. The Vicar did not even know where his son was, or whether he had gone under altogether. He made rather a mess of things here, you know, and it didn't seem likely that he would make a brilliant success of anything anywhere. Yet he's managed to do pretty well. He's struck a gold mine. He intimates that he is coming home soon to try the role of a millionaire."

"I once met in America—in New

York," Lord Daventry said, "a man who had struck a gold mine—in Colorado also, I believe. But he had his worries. He had been foolish enough to marry—not wisely, but too well. His wife possessed everything that a man desires in a woman—except womanliness. In all other respects, she was charming. Very charming. She certainly had unusual beauty and distinction."

"He told you so?" Ward asked, raising his eyebrows.

"I told myself so," Lord Daventry replied. "Quite fortuitously, I saw her. She was a remarkable woman, peculiarly alluring."

He became reflective. "I remember her very well, though I saw her once only. She impressed me as a most creditable modern version of Cleopatra."

"But," he went on, "will you explain to me that scene last night—the peculiar relations that seem to exist between Nancy and the Vicar?"

"Curiously," Ward said, "this letter has some connection with the subject. You know so much about our little affairs, and imagine so much more, that I may as well tell you the truth and prevent you from guessing uncharitably. It is not the Vicar who is to blame, but the man who seems to have become a millionaire—Harold Thorpe."

"A case of the sins of the sons being visited on the fathers?" Lord Daventry interposed. "Harold has eaten the grapes, and the Vicar's teeth are set on edge. Eh?"

"Yes. Harold stayed at the vicarage for some months before he went to America. He was at a loose end. He'd lost his position in the North as a mining engineer—drink, I think—so he hung around here till something turned up."

"And the first something was Nancy?" the old man suggested.

"She was a pretty girl then," Ward said. "Simple and affectionate, but with an inherited tendency, I believe, to be too easily influenced by the pleasure of the moment. We are beginning to understand heredity better than we did a few years ago," he added, "but it still counts."

"True," Lord Daventry observed. "I sometimes realize the responsibility quite acutely. What, I ask myself, have I handed down to you? Faith, hope, charity, of course. But what else have I passed on to you? What lurks beneath that marble surface of restraint and orderly habit? Do fires glow within the walls of ice? Does the heart throb, the brain dream? Even a small folly would relieve my anxiety, John; for if you are not a miserable sinner, as the family tradition demands, surely my gray hairs will go down in sorrow to the grave. I am old now, and the memory of my early vices will not support unassisted the reputation of our house. Your brother"—he shrugged his shoulders—"George does his best, but he is a mere fool. I relied upon you to bring us into notoriety with some really illustrious *esclandre*."

Ward resumed calmly. "Harold Thorpe met Nancy. The girl fell in love with him. He was not willfully a cad, but careless. He had nothing to do, and Nancy was certainly very pretty and attractive. They met frequently. Nobody knew about it at the time, but of course everybody did afterward. Well, Thorpe went away. A few months later, there was a baby. It died within a week. Nancy altered terribly, poor girl. She didn't leave the neighborhood, and wouldn't let the Vicar or anybody else help her. But she just went to the bad. She continued to live with her father; I dare say he gave her a rough time, but he didn't turn her out. He was hurt at the ironworks two years ago—and died. The company offered to pay Nancy five shillings a week if she didn't bring an action for compensation. She lives on that, and what she gets—in other ways. Nobody has any influence over her."

"It has been a sorry business for the Vicar. He feels that he is responsible for the tragedy, somehow; that he should have been able to prevent his own son from bringing such unhappiness into the parish. He has brooded over it ever since. Heaven knows how often and with what patience he has tried to

help Nancy, and bring her back to some conception of self-respect. She merely reviles him, brutally, hideously. Yet he even wanted her to live at the vicarage, as his daughter, his son's wife."

Lord Daventry nodded. "He would have needed all his Christian fortitude if she'd accepted. Eh? No two things in the universe are so widely and hopelessly separated as two human beings, of whom one has breeding, and the other hasn't. Whatever you do, John, avoid the Nancy type, especially at the most alluring stage of prettiness and simplicity. Only a lady knows how to be kissed."

"Do you know anything," Ward asked abruptly, "of Lady Winter?" Oddly, his grandfather's remarks had caused him to think of her.

"Lady Winter? Yes, I have heard of her. Kent family, I believe; good blood, but small income. Married a City man—one of those fellows who get knighted for being in the way at a royal function; poor blood, but large income. He died some time ago. Widow wanders. Very attractive, it is said, but manages her own affairs and doesn't advertise. Why do you ask? Eh?"

"She is staying down here with her sister, Mrs. Harrington," Ward answered. "I have not seen her. I was merely curious."

Lord Daventry was interested. "Her sister has a place here?" he asked.

Ward laughed. "Not a large place. Her husband is employed at the ironworks, and they live economically. Mrs. Harrington's boy died a few days ago. Lady Winter has come down for a little while to cheer her up."

"Odd how families drift about and change their status," the old man said. "It would be interesting to know why Mrs. Harrington married an ironworks employee. After a few years, rigid economy palls, even if the husband doesn't. Love and illusions in a cottage are very charming, but disillusionment can only be mitigated by a palace. The daily, unavoidable intimacy of the poor is immoral. It ought to be a criminal offense for married people to

see each other more frequently than once a week. Distance is the proper basis of all close affection. How can two people respect each other, or themselves, when they share three meals a day and have only one bathroom?"

IX

WARD was busy in the surgery till noon. Then, having to visit a patient on the road to Mow Hill, beyond Clayfield, he determined to ride, instead of taking the car or trap.

It was a clear day, cool and bracing. As he rode, he considered the view that his grandfather had so often criticised, and it seemed good to him, in spite of the decay and neglect. The smoke rising in the distance, the disorder and bareness around, carried their message of energy, of things done and in the doing. Ward felt that he was in harmony with that littered land, with its people and its purpose.

He rode on, at an easy pace; it was two hours before he reached the end of his journey and pulled up at a small cottage, old and solitary. He had not expected to be delayed; but the woman whom he had come to see was fretful and in pain. When he came away, the afternoon had gone.

Riding back across the fields, he came within view of the Harringtons' house. In the summer it looked attractive, with the flowers and the green grass in front, the little orchard behind and the creepers covering the walls. Now, small and bare, it seemed a sinister cage for a woman who had known something, at least, of life's graciousness in earlier days. He felt for Mrs. Harrington a supreme pity.

He had come to a little pool, with a few gaunt trees throwing their reflections into the turbid water. The Clayfield path ran by it, and a rough seat had been improvised.

Ward's eye, roving, caught the glint of metal. He checked his horse and looked down, more closely; dismounting, he picked up a small gold pencil. He examined it, curiously, and found initials

engraved on the side—"E. W." Wondering who E. W. was, he put the pencil in his pocket, and moved by a sudden impulse, sat down on the bench and lit a cigar.

Smoking his cigar very slowly, and letting his thoughts drift unsteered, Ward waited for something which he knew was going to happen. The impulse which had moved him to sit down when he found the pencil, instead of remounting and riding away, was due to no casual desire, but to the curious power he seemed to possess, without comprehending it, of forecasting the immediate future.

Suddenly a hand, heavy and harsh, was laid on his left shoulder. A voice, deep but not resonant, came to him as if from a distance.

"Don't move," it said, "or I'll break your damned neck."

Acquiescent, incurious, Ward gazed at the dull waters of the pool.

"Speak, curse you!" The command came savagely. "Do you know who I am? Do you know why I'm here—why I'm going to kill you like the damned swine you are?"

Ward spoke meditatively. "I don't quite know why you are here, Harrington, but I shall find out."

"Yes, by God," Harrington cried, "you'll find out! Perhaps you don't know, my fine gentleman, that I've got my knife open in my hand, ready to drive it into that white throat of yours! A two-inch blade it's got—enough to make a pretty gash. I opened it when I saw you—I meant to see you sooner or later, but I didn't know the pleasure'd come so soon—and here, where it's so quiet and lonely." He stopped suddenly. "So you knew my voice, did you?" he asked. "You recognized me? I thought you would. Aye, I thought you would."

"Not from your voice only," Ward said. "But there is a certain alcoholic taint in your breath which is suggestive, though scarcely pleasant. It would seem that I always meet you, Harrington, under these unpleasant conditions. The last time especially, I remember. You had had a debauch, and you were

drunk—very drunk. Your wife went out in the worst storm we have had for two years and battled her way through the cold and the rain and the wind, in utter darkness, to fetch me, because her son was dying. We came back together. We could not save him. It was too late. But we relieved some of his pain. He died. And you were drunk."

Harrington listened without interrupting. "Yes," he said. "You told me some of that before. You woke me up to tell me."

"I thought you ought to know," Ward said drily. "The event appeared to concern you."

"God!" the drunkard cried. His left hand, which he had not removed from Ward's shoulder, pressed down convulsively. It was some time before he spoke again. When he did so, his voice was like a hoarse whisper.

"You're a hard man," he said. "You don't know what you did when you woke me up that night, and you don't care. But you killed something in me—something that was ME. I'm Harrington, now, in a way. I've got Harrington's body and Harrington's voice. I do his work and live in his house. But I'm dead. This body is a shell, a husk. It isn't real; it isn't solid. It's a coffin, and all hell is writhing inside it. That's your work."

"No," Ward said curtly. "Your own."

"Call it the devil's," Harrington said. "That'll fit both of us. I'm not human, anyway, now. I'm mad. You think I've been drinking. I have. Brandy. I never used to touch brandy. Beer was good enough for me. Now I drink a bottle of brandy a day. I live on it. I haven't eaten a crumb since the night you woke me up. I can't. I've hardly slept. I just burn. That's your work, again."

"I should put it down to the brandy," Ward said.

Harrington laughed aloud. "You fool! The brandy's like water. It doesn't scorch me. It helps to cool the flames. Can't you understand what you did for me that night? Can't you

understand that if I kill you, as I'm going to, I'm not making you suffer one hundredth part of what you've made me? But I'll take a life for a life, by God! For you've killed me. I'm dead. Dead."

When Ward spoke, his voice had changed: the steel had gone out of it. "Not dead," he said. "But, by God's grace, your soul, perhaps, is being brought again to life. It may be, Harrington, that this was the purpose in all that has happened. A life for a life, you say? Yes, Walter's living soul for yours: his, unstained, back to its Creator and to peace, that yours may burst its bonds and come to its resurrection."

There was silence. Then something like a sob escaped from Harrington. He withdrew his left hand from Ward's shoulder.

"Turn round, sir," he said.

Ward did so.

Harrington stretched out his right hand. "I had no knife," he said.

Ward nodded. "I understand. You did not mean to kill. You wanted to give me shock for shock—to repay me for my harshness that night?"

"Yes," Harrington said.

Ward looked at the pain-seamed face, the haunted eyes. "It was just," he said. "Yet I did not mean to be cruel. I don't know, though," he added. "Perhaps I did. I think I wanted to hurt you. I am sorry."

"I had no knife," Harrington repeated slowly. "But I might have killed you. I wanted to make you suffer; and there was murder in my heart. Perhaps I meant to strangle you. Aye, it might have come to that. I was mad. I will go home, sir."

A clear voice came through the gloom. "I was wondering how long you would be."

The two men turned. It was still light enough for Ward to see, though obscurely, the cloaked form of a woman. The height, the poise suggested Mrs. Harrington: but the voice was different, in intensity, tone and pitch.

"I came to meet you, James," she continued. "You are late, I think."

"Yes, I'm late," Harrington agreed. It did not occur to him to introduce Ward. "Good night, sir," he said. "I'll remember meeting you." He turned away, without offering to shake hands.

Ward watched them as they walked along the path together. He realized that this must be Mrs. Harrington's sister—Lady Winter. He wondered if she had overheard any of the strange conversation. Had she spoken as soon as she arrived, or had she been a witness for some minutes, fearing to intervene?"

He recalled the little gold pencil that he had picked up. The initials engraved on it were "E. W." The "W" might stand for "Winter."

X

At the service on Sunday, Ward directed his grandfather's attention to two ladies, dressed in black, who sat several pews forward, on the opposite side. As the congregation streamed slowly from the church, they all met at the gate. Lord Daventry, as he was introduced to Mrs. Harrington and her sister, gazed curiously at the latter's face.

Lady Winter in many ways resembled her sister. The contour of her face, with its almost perfect proportions, suggested the relationship; but unlike Mrs. Harrington's, it retained the softness and the color of girlhood and was unlined. Her hair had perplexing tints of bronze and gold, while her sister's was a simple, dull brown. Her violet eyes, unusually large, seemed slumbrous, indifferent. Ward wondered how they would look, lustrous, unleashed, vivid with passion. Undeliberately, he looked at her lips.

Lord Daventry, surveying her with an air of polite aloofness, was considering, critically, impressions suddenly revived. When the process of association and reconstruction was completed, he found himself picturing a large room, brilliant with lights, susurrant with vague babble, thronged with men and women. At a small round table, he perceived, clearly, two men: one, stal-

wart, blond, barely middle-aged; the other, old, somewhat shriveled, with an aquiline nose—indubitably himself. At another table, he saw a woman, slender, beautiful, with strange, violet eyes. . . .

Calmly, with the same air of detachment, he continued to gaze at Lady Winter.

She was speaking. Ward, listening, perceived that her voice was not only musical and soft, but that it had also a peculiar *timbre*, which suggested, irresistibly, a color; and, involved with the color, a pervading sense of sexuality.

"It is curious that I have not met you before, Lord Daventry; but I shall probably meet you again before long. Lady Normacott has asked me to stay with her in June."

"You know my mother?" Ward asked, astonished.

"I met Lady Normacott in London."

"I begin to realize," Lord Daventry said, "that the only way to escape from the unexpected is to expect it. I certainly did not imagine that I should meet here, in this simple, Arcadian neighborhood, any individual so complicated and sophisticated as a friend of my daughter-in-law must inevitably be."

To himself he said: "This, undoubtedly, is the charming lady whom I saw at Bishop's—not accompanied by her husband. And Lilian knows her! She has sent her an invitation—" His lips twitched slightly.

He added, inquiringly: "You have but recently returned from America?"

She lifted her eyebrows. "A year ago."

"Probably," Lord Daventry remarked, "you found much to interest you in that country of much interest. I myself returned two years ago. But my impressions are still vivid."

"It is almost odd," she said pensively, "that we did not meet there. In a large country, there is so much room for accidental encounters."

Lord Daventry agreed. "It is only when people live in the same hotel," he suggested, "that they never see each other. You and I, wandering through half a continent, and concealed amongst

a population of ninety millions, possibly stood side by side without realizing the importance of the incident. Yet it seems to me," he added deliberately, "that I could scarcely forget any encounter, however slight, with—Lady Winter."

She smiled. "Is that a compliment, or an innuendo?"

"A mere statement of fact," Lord Daventry said.

They had been walking very slowly on. Now, they had reached the parting of the ways.

"I return home shortly," Lord Daventry observed. "But I hope to see you again in June. It will be a perfect godsend to have an intelligent person in the house. Lilian possesses an instinct for fatuousness—she calls it eccentricity. Eccentricity, she considers, constitutes genius. As she worships genius, and I myself never issue any invitations, our house parties are a trifle dull. You, Lady Winter, will cheer us up. I will not say good-bye, but *au revoir*."

The two men turned toward home, each busy with his own thoughts. Lord Daventry reflected upon the irony of life. He, alone, perhaps, in England, knew the history of this woman, with her manifold experiences, discreetly separated from present notoriety by the Atlantic. And it was he who had been destined to meet her, in this remote district, so alien from her usual environment.

To Ward, the way home was lit by large, slumbrous eyes. In the air was the music of a voice, low, soft, peculiarly caressing.

XI

LADY NORMACOTT did not deserve her father-in-law's disparagement.

She was a woman of much charm and dignity, and still comparatively young. Yet her life had not been free from tragic episodes: her husband had been killed by an accident while hunting.

George, the eldest boy, was known by his father's courtesy title. He was a dull boy, unemotional, neither vicious nor deliberately virtuous. Lord Daven-

try, from the first, called him a fool. As he grew older, he developed a trend toward sensuality of a sordid, unoriginal type. The boy was sent down from Oxford, muddled away two years at an army crammer's, and then assumed the role of a man-about-town. Lady Normacott lived in constant fear that he would bring home a chorus girl to share with her the name that she had borne alone for so many years.

John, the younger son, had shown different inclinations. Quiet and self-contained, he had altered little in character during boyhood and youth. In spite of his reserve—or perhaps, because of it—he had been popular at Eton. Lord Daventry, disgusted with George and his Oxford stupidities, had insisted upon the younger boy going to Cambridge, where he wouldn't be "handicapped by his brother's reputation for idiocy." He came home with some scholastic honors, and a determination, bewildering to his mother and his grandfather, to study medicine.

Ultimately he had settled at Newchurch, selecting the dreary district, as he had chosen his profession, without regarding the protests of his grandfather, or any preferences except his own. And Lord Daventry, admiring him for the exhibition of will power, visited him regularly for the congenial purpose of gibing at things local and universal.

During his Eton and Cambridge days, Ward had spent the greater part of his vacations with his own people, and the affection between his sister Ethel and himself had been strengthened by their common interests and corresponding characters. But since his prolonged absence, first in London and then at Newchurch, Ethel had drawn nearer to her mother, gradually comprehending the sadness now inherent in the life of the older woman, perplexed and alarmed by George's misconduct and the ominous outlook for the future.

Lady Normacott, for a distraction, began to cultivate the society of those men and women—writers chiefly—who specialized in the obvious and so had ample leisure to escape obscurity. Oc-

asionally a sportsman drifted into the circle, an explorer or a mere globe trotter, if a book of memoirs had been issued or was supposed to be contemplated. The house was now full of such people. Lady Winter, who had chosen to remember an early and informal invitation, was on a different footing; Lady Normacott had heard her described as an enigma, and she had long desired to add an enigma to her collection. Yet Lady Winter owed some, at least, of her welcome to the unwarranted report that she was preparing a vivacious book dealing with her American experiences. It was understood vaguely that she had had American experiences.

Lady Normacott was sitting in her boudoir, in the afternoon of a warm day. Ethel had brought her a letter, which had come by the second post.

"John is coming home," she announced after reading it. "He is quite well, he says; but would like a change. It is fortunate we have a few people in the house. He will enjoy meeting them."

XII

"CLEVER men," Lady Winter said, "are usually very uninteresting."

"It is only the uninteresting women who discover interesting men," answered Ward. They were strolling down one of the winding walks in the garden.

She considered for a moment. "I must dispute that, in self-defense. But I think it is quite true that only uninteresting women contract the *habit* of discovering interesting men. It is a sign of superficiality. They demand novelty. Strangers appeal to them, for the moment. They admire everything that they know imperfectly. As soon as they think they really comprehend, they are tired. That is why so many women have a past. They are never content with the present—always looking to the future, to the new thing, the untested. They experiment perpetually—and sometimes the experiment is fatal."

"It is then that they become interesting," he said.

"You do not like the naïve woman?" she asked.

"I did not mean to imply that. I have noticed that women are usually most attractive when they know, and when they don't know—quite frankly. When they think they know, and emphasize their sex by italicized hints about the subtlety and cleverness of women and the stupidity of men, they are rather tiresome—to men. After all, the greatest charm of a woman is her womanhood; and that is an affair of nature, not of art or artifice."

He walked by her side for a while without speaking. His pale face was calm. Yet he was obsessed by her physical nearness. Some influence flowed from her, passing into his body like a warm flood, charging his whole being electrically.

He turned after a few moments, and looked at her. The heat of the June day was oppressive; but unveiled, without a parasol, she seemed fearless of the sun rays. The flush on her cheeks appeared to come from within, duskily, rather than to be external, superficial. Her eyes, drooping, slumbrous, absorbed fire without returning it. She was dressed entirely in white.

They had passed through the garden and the ordered grounds and had come to the lake, dark and cool in the sunshine. Beyond were the woods, with their massed green, their large restfulness.

"Do you remember," she asked, "sitting, some months ago, by a little pool and meditating for quite a long time? It was colder then than now, and darker."

"I remember," he said. He wondered, as he had wondered at the time, how much of the scene with Harrington she had witnessed or comprehended before she came through the gloom and spoke to her brother-in-law.

She answered his unspoken question. "You had a trying experience with James. I heard the whole of your conversation. Of course I should not have listened; and of course I did. I admired your composure, Dr. Ward. It was my first lesson in what a man really means by self-possession, and I was in-

terested. I wonder if you knew how cold and merciless you seemed?"

"I did not intend to be merciless. I intended to be just—and forgot to be charitable, or even fair."

"I hope you don't regret what you did," she said. "A man who can be so quietly and brutally truthful when he believes that he is in imminent danger of a murderous attack has no need to apologize. You were superb."

"By the way," he said, "this, I think, was really responsible for the peculiar meeting."

He took from his pocket the small gold pencil, with the initials, "E. W.," that he had picked up.

"I saw it on the ground as I was riding by." He passed it to her. "It is yours, I think."

She took it. "Yes. I wondered where I had lost it. I used to sit on that old cracked bench sometimes and scribble a little."

"May I keep it?" he asked.

She gave it back to him.

He sat looking out at the lake. Gradually the sunshine seemed to fade, the day passed into darkness. Mist drifted down upon them, heavy and clinging. Then lights were lit, one by one. . . .

"You are very quiet," she said.

He came back at once from his dream. The sun was shining, the sky unclouded. "You seemed so far away," she said.

"I was very near to you," he answered, and shivered slightly. She noticed it. "What did you see?" she asked, putting her hand on his.

"Darkness. And then the lights were lit."

"And then?" she persisted.

"The lights went out," he said.

The pressure of her fingers seemed like wine of music in his blood. He took her in his arms.

"I feel like a child that has been alone in the dark," she said. "Now the lights are lit."

"They will go out again," he said.

"It doesn't matter," she said. "I have seen them shining."

"My arms have been empty a long time," he said.

Yet it seemed to him at the moment that they had always held this smooth and supple body.

Suddenly she changed.

"Are you always serious?" she asked; and laughed. He thought that her laugh was like the melody of silver bells.

"You are a curious man," she said gravely, after a little. "I can hardly believe that all this—has happened."

"Give me your lips," he said, bending down to her upturned face. Passion leapt suddenly from him like a flame, and she shivered in his arms; then clung to him for a few moments, tense, unrelaxed.

XIII

WARD did not attempt to control his thoughts during the evening. He realized the strangeness and danger of his mood; but a chemical change seemed to have taken place in the constitution of his being: the electricity of passion had disturbed and reenergized the molecular system. He did not review the events of the afternoon connectedly, or attempt to analyze his conduct. What had happened had happened—not in the few hours of a summer's day, unpremeditated and unprepared: but as the inevitable sequel to a tale twice told. Glimpses of revelation came to him; but provocatively, leaving him still unsure whether deeds of the past or the future, or his own imaginings of the present, were flashed imperfectly on the film of consciousness. But life was no longer restricted, ordered and confined, to be lived decorously or futilely in the space of a generation. Time seemed to have passed from the limits of normal reckoning: he was scarcely conscious of the long series of divisions, of the shadows on the dial, the separation of light from darkness. Somewhere on the circumference of the unbroken circle, he had come again to the eternal Woman. His whole being flowed out to her: habit, personality, will, were fluid in that fervent heat of passion. Her eyes, that he had seen no longer slumbrous; her caressing voice; her blood-warm lips, her smooth and supple body, were woven

into his fermenting brain, warp and woof of dreams dyed with desire. So long the vanities of pleasure had been blotted by sleep, or revived, disowned, and clutched again through hours of restlessness. Surely now he might take his ease, forgetting the task and the taskmaster, drinking the ancient wine, following the ancient ancestral lure!

Yet, driven as he was by the impulses of fever, his manner, through long habit, was so restrained, and the pallor of his face, crowned with its contrasting jet-black hair, so secretive of emotion, that he hid from his mother and her guests the storm within him. Lord Daventry alone had coded the signals of the hot, unresting eyes, always, before, so steadfast and serene; and the old man did not waste the opportunity for a mocking gibe.

"So our Samson, so strong in his purity, has found at last the beguiling Delilah? Eh? No longer is John numbered with the saints; his place is with the sinners—and particularly with the pretty sinners. Did not Antony fling away the world for a few embraces? And a greater than Cleopatra is here."

Ward went to his room. It was some time before he undressed. Then, in his white pajamas, he stood for some time by the open window before going to bed. His whole being throbbled. Merely to rest, to be placid and still, was impossible. He was aware of a continued, imperious call, as from a summer sun to an immured prisoner. The spiritual wanderlust, which he had governed harshly and kept in check, asserted its compelling authority. He must go out from his narrow world of self-restraint and ordered limits into the large world of romance and dreams.

The attempt to think connectedly irked him. Deliberately, he yielded to the mood of madness. The checked cravings of many days and nights, scattered impressions of broken reveries, were gathered together and woven into an orgy of sensuous imaginings. With his eyes closed, he abandoned himself to the allurements of waking dreams. Images, vivid and real, passed or lingered. Faces, changing, yet the same,

came very close to him; smiling, provocative; or wondering, unsure. Crimson lips repeated the challenge of questioning glances. . . .

He sat up, suddenly, tortured by this vivid imagery. Slipping from the bed, he went again to the window.

The cold, clear light of the moon neither bewildered nor assisted him. He had passed too far beyond the border line of reason and unreason: the thrall of passion held him; freedom would have seemed intolerable. Not the voice and the magic of one summer only wrought alchemy in blood and nerves and brain: the voices of many summers, heard but shunned, now forced their way imperiously to an audience.

He knew that this was not a mere abrupt invasion: it was the sequel to those moments when he had half yielded in the thought to the allurements of sex and beauty—not the beauty of a known individual, but of one yet unmet, built up vaguely by hints from the actual. Sensuousness was in him, rooted in his nature; it had grown with his growth, establishing itself impregnably.

His grandfather, glib, had mentioned Antony. Yes, Antony, master of half the world, had flung away that empire for the slavery of passion. Well, he would fling away a wider lordship. He had been master of himself. He surrendered that sovereignty.

He arose and wandered to and fro about the room, feverishly. The intensity of his feeling appalled him. His whole nature seemed to call to her, claiming her, with a force savage and irresistible.

And so she came to him.

XIV

WARD SAW the door swing back noiselessly when she released it. He noticed that her eyelids drooped, that her face had the remoteness of sleep. Her feet, unslipped, bare, arrested his glance: they seemed so little, so fragile. She took a few steps; then stopped, as if in doubt. Slowly, she stretched out her arms, with a vague, questing movement,

that seemed to hold both invitation and entreaty.

He did not move; for a sense of unreality was creeping over him. It seemed that what was happening was a reflex of the past, or a foreshadowing of the future. The present was formless, negligible. Hours were minutes, minutes hours. He could keep no reckoning. His eyes became dim as he looked at her, shadowed as by a curtain.

He seemed to be in a strange room. She was asleep. He bent down, that her breath might come to him as a caress. It seemed very wonderful that she was there, sleeping, as a wife might sleep.

A wife! The word which he had repeated in his thoughts now struck a sudden chord of unrest. The association was incongruous. This overwhelming, flaming madness was remote from wifehood, with its adjustment to the daily, normal details of living and the larger purposes of life.

It was a woman, not a wife, whom he had coveted and still craved—a woman with red lips whose sweetness should be crushed with kisses. . . . And she had to come to him, dreaming, and drawn by his need for her, by his savage, irresistible appeal.

All the tendencies that were in him—the souls of the dead through whom he lived—ranged themselves as in hostile armies, the savage and the sensuous, the serene and spiritual. Tentacles, tipped with flame, plucked at his heart strings, searing them.

And suddenly, reflection passed from him. He no longer reached out from his cage of emotions, clutching at vague thoughts, reminiscences of old habits. The room was darkened: and he stayed in the darkness. Projected from some storehouse of subconsciousness, moving pictures floated before his eyes; pictures at first strange and unfamiliar, yet soon recognized and placed in their order of succession. He stood, rigid, watching, as the panorama passed. And at last there were no more pictures. He was buried in intense darkness, through which came only a sound of breathing. He listened, until the rhythm seemed intolerable.

He did not know how long it was before the darkness lifted. He was trembling excessively. He listened for the sound of a woman breathing. He could hear nothing.

XV

AT six o'clock Ward awoke, with a feeling of urgency, of necessity. He was confused for some time: the vraisemblance of dreams still lingered; as he opened his eyes, he expected to see a face that had haunted him through his brief sleep, alluring, wondering, accusing. As in the aftermath of a debauch, when the brain is sluggish and unsure, and details have not emerged from the complex of disorder, he groped for a clear understanding. The silence struck him like a tumult of sound. Painfully, he pieced together the fragments that memory surrendered with reluctance. Yet, when he had finished, when the happenings of the night had been reconstructed, he did not comprehend. He thrust out his hand as if to ward off the shadow that threatened to overwhelm him.

But the oppression lingered. He could not reconcile returning common sense with these vivid illusions; he could not separate the earlier impressions from the later imaginings, or say when the actual ended and the fallacy began. He remembered the growing tempest of passion, the insurgence of his whole nature in that moon-flooded night: he remembered the unrest, the waiting. But that which he had seen—was it less real than the unreality of the moonlight, a phantasmagoria of the emotion-drugged senses, baseless and futile?

A cold bath brightened him. He dressed, and went out into the garden.

Lord Daventry, sauntering down the same path, regarded him with curious eyes.

"Your Saintship is up early. Is this a libel on our beds, or a delicate compliment to our sparkling air and sunshine—truly so different from the reproachful atmosphere of your own dear Arcadia! Eh?"

"I did not tell you," he resumed,

"that I have good reason to expect very bad news. This exemplary George, I am told, has now fallen in love, for the fourth and final time, with the chorus girl of our melancholy anticipations. She is no doubt far too good for him, but I cannot regret her with enthusiasm as the future Lady Daventry. Yet the entanglement seems likely to proceed to that fatal extremity. Pleasant, eh?"

"I am sorry," Ward said. He understood his grandfather too well to suggest that the news might be false. He knew that the old man had measured the precise value of his information.

"Of course," Lord Daventry continued, "we are a strange family. It is scarcely fair to judge us by normal standards, for we are not normal people. But, though we have been passionate and romantic, moody and misanthropic, austere and cynical, we have never yet produced such a specimen as—I will refrain from naming him. We have done a few wise things and innumerable wicked things; and some of us, I believe, have done some rather remarkable things—you know that legend of queer happenings once or twice in the centuries—magic or devilry, second sight or clairvoyance, call it what you will—"

Ward nodded.

"It is quite possible," the old man said, "that we have gone as far as chorus girls, or their earlier equivalents. It is even probable." He took his grandson's arm. "Now even you, my dear John, have been scorching your saintly soul in the alluring flame of femininity. It is amusing, of course; but dangerous."

Ward withdrew his arm. "I thought you knew me well enough," he said coldly, "to know that I have always gone, and shall always go, my own way—as you have gone yours."

"I trust not," Lord Daventry said. "Go your own way, if you must—but not as I have gone mine. My path was a trifle irregular; and irregularities, my dear John, are expensive."

He was silent for a little while, reviewing a procession of ghosts. Their faces seemed less pallid, less accusing, in that sunlit hour.

"Have I ever mentioned to you," he

said at last, "that during my last trip to America I met one of the millionaires for which that great country is justly celebrated? He had been a gold miner, I believe, and a speculator. Amongst other things, he had speculated in matrimony—and lost heavily. Yet his wife was a very charming woman; unusually attractive, and also unusual in other ways. As I understood the story, there were faults on both sides, but no open scandal: that is to say, everybody knew about it, but it was a profound secret. There was no divorce. The lady, though lax, was a Catholic. By the way, Lady Winter, I believe, is a Catholic?"

"I don't see the point," Ward said. "Of course I know there is one, or you would not have revived the story."

"A coincidence, rather than a point," the old man rejoined suavely. "You see, I happened to meet the lady again in England, and I was naturally interested. She has resumed the name of her first husband, and is regarded as a widow. Odd that I should meet her, eh—especially as I am perhaps the only man in the country who is aware of the precise circumstances. Of course, every woman is entitled to her own past, and I should not dream of referring to a purely private matter unless there were excellent reasons. I am not by inclination a preacher. I am merely a connoisseur of emotion. Nevertheless, it is permissible to offer a suggestion. Eh?" He looked thoughtfully at his grandson. "I shouldn't—go too far with Lady Winter, if I were you," he said. "Her husband might object—even if he had to come from America to do so."

He patted Ward's arm gently. "Our modern Saint John has also his revelation," he murmured.

XVI

LADY WINTER was seated at a little distance from the group in the garden. Lord Daventry approached her with a smile.

"While these dear people are babbling," he said, "I should like to tell you

a little story which seems to me amusing. But I suggest that we withdraw for a few moments from this poetical exhibition which my daughter-in-law finds so entertaining. By the lake there are several rustic arbors, ancient and modern, in which, undistracted, one could tell an amusing story quite pleasantly."

Lady Winter's slow gaze questioned his eyes, which seemed inscrutable.

She rose.

"It is impossible to resist the temptation of an amusing story—from Lord Daventry," she said. "It will be so delightfully—original."

They followed the winding path to the lake and sat down on a bench. It was the same bench to which Ward had taken her.

"You will forgive me," Lord Daventry said, "for bringing you so far merely to listen to an amusing story. But I myself went much further to hear it, in the first instance. Indeed, I consider that I went almost as far as an elderly man, with no character to lose, can be expected to go—from Clarice's, which is quite respectable when society is out of town, to Bishop's, which is"—he twisted the handle of his ebony stick thoughtfully—"in New York."

"It sounds rather ecclesiastical," she said, her lips hardening.

"Yet it has no connection with the straight and narrow path of duty," he answered. "You will find it in that famous Broadway which leads so many to destruction—with its kindly lights amid the encircling gloom. Eh?"

"I have heard that Broadway is a brilliant thoroughfare," she said composedly.

The old man did not look at her. "Since my visit to the United States," he said, "I have sometimes regretted that, with the disadvantages of senile decay, which my friends attribute to me, I do not possess also some of its privileges, such as loss of memory. I once—and this is the amusing story I wished you to hear—dropped in at Bishop's for an after-theater supper with an agreeable acquaintance whom I had met at my hotel. A slight accident

led to the discovery that we had mutual friends—in America, and we passed a pleasant evening together. While we were toying with terrapin, I noticed a lady at another table; it would have been difficult to avoid noticing her, for she had unusual beauty and unusual charm. I had never met her before: I did not know her name; and I certainly did not imagine that I should meet her again—any more than I should have expected, Lady Winter, to meet you—here—at this moment.”

Lady Winter carefully failed to conceal a yawn. “That you should meet again,” she observed, “by a special effort of providence, a pretty woman whom you once saw in a well known restaurant, is certainly excruciatingly funny.”

There was a characteristic insolence in her manner and in her slow speech, that attracted the cynical old man of the world.

“Had I been even twenty years younger,” he said, “it would have taken several special efforts of providence to prevent such a meeting. “For the lady, though accompanied, was not accompanied by her husband. Curiously, I was.”

He paused for a moment. She remained silent, and he continued: “The attitudes of the husband and wife, when they discovered each other, were poems in pose. The glances which they exchanged were optical epigrams. It appeared that this was their first meeting since the regretted separation. Nothing could have been more delicate.” He looked at the lake, cool, smooth, chromatic. “Really, Lady Winter, I congratulate you on your taste in husbands.”

He expected her to be disconcerted. Looking at him steadily, she laughed—a low, rippling laugh of amusement.

“What a long time you have taken,” she said, “to tell me that I was discovered! But really, you know, if I choose to retain the name of my first husband, and to be discreetly silent about—the other—isn’t it, after all, just my own affair, and nobody else’s?”

“Assuredly, it is your own affair,”

he replied with composure—“unless you choose to make it mine also. Lady Winter, I am going to make an appeal to you, and I think you will not disregard it. If I read you rightly—and I have been considered a good judge of women—there can be few moods of emotion that you have not tested, few character riddles, complex or shallow, that you have not solved. You have had your triumphs and your amusements, and no doubt your deeper feelings. Monotonous your life can scarcely have been. I assume that you have had lovers—it is impossible that you should not have had—lovers of many types. One more or less can make little difference. Now it is obvious to you, and to me, that my grandson is infatuated with you. I do not blame him, but I do ask you to make it easier for him to conquer a passion which could so easily make shipwreck of his life. I have been proud of John. I know well, though he does not know that I know, how strong and remorseless his temptations have been: for we have wild blood in our veins, and I am sure that what I inherited in the way of devilry I transmitted with compound interest added. John must have had many a struggle with the beast within him. Yet he has gone steadfastly on his way, without making any fuss about it.

“Lady Winter, you are not—forgive me—a good woman. It is a strange thing for me to say that. I could not say it under any other conditions. But an old man, who has done much evil, can recognize his own type, though it be incarnated in a form so beautiful. I speak to you as a comrade to a comrade; not condemning; understanding perfectly; but compelled to speak by the one duty that I hold sacred.”

“You are quite right,” she said composedly. “I admit frankly that I am not a good woman. I have already acknowledged the truth to your grandson.”

Lord Daventry was puzzled. “You are more subtle or more simple than I conceived,” he said. “But let it pass. Lady Winter, send my boy from you;

kill this infatuation of his. You can do it. You know well that your—love—would be a fatal gift for him. Once flesh the carnal devil that is in him, and heaven knows what the end would be. Lady Winter, my grandson is a brave man. He imagines that I mock him when I call him, as I often do, Saint John. Perhaps he is right. The gift of sneering which I possess so comprehensively tends to develop into a habit. But if I have mocked him, there was something beneath the mockery. I see in him what I might have been. I see in him also another possibility—that he may become what I am. And God forbid!"

Lady Winter was astonished at this revelation of feeling in one whom she had considered cynical, self-centered, withered emotionally.

"You have been very frank," she said. "I will be equally frank with you. You say I am not a good woman. I am not. You say I have had lovers. I have. You say you understand women. It is a delightful gift which I do not share. I am merely one of those peculiar women, Lord Daventry, who understand perfectly that they cannot hope to understand themselves. Most women are so delightfully normal that they never admit that they are incomprehensible. They have been persuaded, by generations of flattery, that they have a remarkable gift called intuition, which enables them to be infallible without being logical. They really believe this. They believe that they can read character at a glance. They even believe that they can think. But not one woman in a thousand really *can* think. They mistake reflex actions for reflection. A woman does not think: she emotionalizes. She does not know: she feels. She does not read character: she invents it. Consequently she makes mistakes, perpetually. But she does not realize that she has made mistakes, because she has no thought standards. She has only emotion standards. When her interest wanes, her passion dwindles, she does not ask why: she is merely conscious of the desire for a change. When her interest increases and her passion intensifies, it is no use asking her to be rational. She is too busy being a woman.

"I am a woman, you see. I must go my own way and work out my own destiny."

Lord Daventry stiffened. "You are not divorced, I believe?" he said.

"No," she returned with composure, "I am not divorced."

"It is impossible for you, therefore, to marry my grandson," he continued.

She smiled at him gently. "Really," she said, "such trifles—need we discuss them, you and I?"

Lord Daventry recognized that the discussion was over.

"By the way," she added carelessly, "you have not, I presume, bored yourself by discussing my second marriage with—anyone?"

"I believe I mentioned the fact to my grandson," he returned drily.

"I thought there were certain things one didn't do," she said.

"Where women are concerned, nothing is impossible," he answered. "You see, I imagined that John might be interested."

XVII

WARD's self-control was obvious to Lady Winter. His attitude was that of a man who had passed beyond passion, rather than of one who merely restrains himself, superbly or through fear. He radiated coldness, inaccessibility. She was distressed; the air seemed chilled; the beauty of the summer night, as they stood together by the lake, was tinged with the foreshadowing of wintry bareness.

It seemed to her that she had no longer a lover whom she could tantalize or delight, weaving the hours into music, or shattering them into discords. Would he indeed follow no more the lure of beauty and strange tempting? And as the fashion of the courtesan dropped from her, useless now, she craved his love with a torturing vehemence. His reserve invested him with a new power.

At last she leaned toward him. "Dear," she said, "you called me last night. You wanted me."

"Yes," he answered.

"I do not know what happened," she

said. "I tried to come to you; but everything is strange, as if I had been dreaming: blurred, unreal. I was frightened; yet I do not know why."

"Dreams in the night," he said. "Why recall them?"

"I want to understand," she said. "You called me; I tried to come to you. But I could not. I seemed, however, to be in a strange place. There was a light at first, then darkness. I can remember no more—except a face bending over me—your face, yet not yours; changed, hard, remorseless. In shadow. I saw it, in the darkness. How?"

"You were dreaming," he said.

"No," she said. "It was *your* dream, if a dream at all; and I was just a part of it."

He was silent.

"What did it mean?" she asked. "Please tell me."

"What does it matter?" he returned. "We come and go. We have lived and shall live. Why cannot we learn wisdom?"

She had leaned nearer to him. He drew away.

"You are changed," she said; not accusingly, but as stating a simple fact.

"Yes," he said. "I am changed."

"Your grandfather has been talking to you," she said.

"I have no interest in anything my grandfather might say," he answered coldly. "I choose for myself, think for myself."

"No," she said. "You have been biased, or you would not seem so different. I was frank with you. I told you I was not a normal woman. I did not think you cared for mere details."

"A husband is not a mere detail," he said drily.

"What does the past matter?" she asked swiftly. "There is all the glorious future—and you worry about dead years."

"No," he said. "I am not worrying. But I do not believe in repeating mistakes, whatever the temptation. One has to foresee the future; and the future is not always glorious."

She looked at his face in the moonlight—pale, resolute.

"You have seen something," she said. "My dream—the darkness. Why don't you tell me? You are not fair. I am not afraid. What must be, must."

"You are wrong," he said. "The future is only unchangeable when one accepts it." He rose. "I do not wish to talk tonight," he said. "Shall we go back?"

She stood beside him. Suddenly, her arms were round his neck, her lips on his. He did not move; made no response; waited. For minutes, they stood so. Then, with a cry of pain, she drew away from him; and they went back to the house.

XVIII

MR. BALDING, publican and churchwarden, wished to marry Miss Sands. She listened to him calmly and was neither shocked nor displeased when he suggested that he might sell the inn and the grocery store and buy or build a habitable house, with a veranda, a garden and a pianola.

She liked Balding, but had grave doubts regarding his sister. Miss Balding had lived with her brother for many years: she had no other near relatives. To expect her now to change her mode of life would be almost an outrage. Miss Sands contemplated regretfully the prospect of two women in one house, on terms of perpetual intimacy, but perhaps without sympathy or affection. She determined to study Miss Balding before taking an irrevocable step.

Dr. Lyster, the *locum tenens*, was a methodical man, and had the excellent habit of keeping a methodical register of engagements. Brief but lucid details, recorded in a desk diary, made it possible to trace him in any emergency. Miss Sands, consulting the diary on Monday, found that he had arranged to dine at the vicarage on the ensuing Wednesday. Promptly she issued invitations—which were accepted—to Mr. and Miss Balding; and devised a dinner that should do justice to her genius.

Wednesday evening arrived; Dr. Lyster departed. Miss Sands, after super-

vising the kitchen preparations, had dressed to receive her guests.

At this juncture, Ward, returning from Daventry, quietly appeared—unannounced; unexpected and, for this one evening, absolutely undesired. He had walked up from the station, entered, as usual, through the surgery and passed on into the hall. There he paused, aware of the odor of cooking.

Miss Sands, emerging from the kitchen, perceived him. For one brief moment anguish possessed her. How would his arrival affect her dinner? How could she explain to him that she had invited her friends to visit his house, occupy his dining room, regale themselves with his provisions?

"Oh!" she said weakly.

"You didn't expect me?" he asked.

She shook her head. "I certainly didn't."

"I will go up and wash," he said. "I am glad to be back again."

The doorbell rang.

Miss Sands, without forming any new scheme of action, responded mechanically. She opened the door. Mr. Balding, carefully dressed, and alone, revealed himself. Removing his hat, he entered.

"My sister," he explained, "had a headache, I am sorry to say; a very severe headache. She sends her kind regards, and will you please excuse her? So I just came along myself, hoping you wouldn't mind."

Miss Sands regarded him sadly. "It's a pity," she said. "I've been looking forward so much to meeting her. But it wouldn't quite do, I'm afraid, for us to dine alone—just you and I, without a chaperon, you know. It seems silly, of course; but it's a wise rule for eight people out of ten, and those who don't need it must put up with it for the sake of those who do."

Balding, though disappointed, offered no protest. "You're quite right," he said. "Quite right. I ought to have thought of that. Maybe some other time—" He paused, and glanced at the stairs, which Ward was now descending.

"It's Dr. Ward," Miss Sands whis-

pered. "He's just come home, unexpectedly."

"Then I won't stay," Balding returned hastily, realizing that the Doctor's return might have had something to do with Miss Sands's views of a dinner without a duenna. "I'll just—"

But Ward had perceived him.

"Why, Balding!" he said.

"I just called," the churchwarden explained, "to consult Miss Sands about—er—a little church matter. But I'm glad to see you back, sir, and I hope you've had a pleasant change. I'll wish you good evening, sir."

"Better stay and have dinner with me," Ward said. "Very pleased if you will. You can tell me all the news. Miss Sands will find something for us, I dare say. She's wonderful, Balding. No matter what time I come in, or however unexpected I may be, she can always rise to the occasion." He sniffed discerningly. "Let me hang your hat up. In five minutes, I assure you—I speak from experience—dinner will be ready. Miss Sands, you will join us to-night, I hope?"

Miss Sands, murmuring that she would, retreated to the kitchen, avoiding the eye of the churchwarden.

The Doctor took his guest into the study. In five minutes, as he had confidently foretold, dinner was served.

"Conceive it, Balding," he said. "I was totally unexpected, and yet this is the kind of thing she provides without an effort. How does she manage it? I confess I cannot understand it at all."

"It's a gift," the churchwarden said. "That's what it is—a gift. I'm mighty glad I—er—happened to call. Mighty glad."

He did not look at Miss Sands.

"And now," Ward said, "tell me all the news. How is the Vicar?"

The churchwarden shook his head ominously. "I'm afraid he's aging," he said.

"One must expect that," Ward said, "when one is old. And the Vicar is old, Balding."

"Aye; but he's older than he was, and he shows it, sir. Times he's absent-minded; and times he seems sad, as if he

was brooding over something. They do say," he added, "that Mr. Harold is coming home again from foreign parts."

"Who has said so?" Ward asked.

For a moment the churchwarden hesitated. "Well," he replied, "I can't say that anyone has told me. But there've been letters, with foreign stamps on them—"

Ward remembered that Balding included, in his various duties, those of village postmaster. He smiled as he thought of the careful inspection that the mail evidently received.

"But you cannot tell what was in the letters merely from the stamps on the outside," he suggested.

"There were postcards as well," Balding said, with simple frankness.

"The Vicar ought to look younger if his son is coming home again—not older," Ward observed after a while.

"Yes," Balding agreed. "He ought. But he doesn't. It's my opinion he's brooding about something; just brooding, that's what it is. I tell you, sir, it hurts me to see him come into the vestry of a Sunday evening, so slow and feeble, and with that look in his eyes as if he wasn't there at all. And his sermons are different from what they used to be. There's something in them that I can't rightly make out. Miss Sands, *she's* noticed it."

He looked inquiringly at the housekeeper.

"Yes," she admitted. "I have noticed. There certainly is something almost creepy in the way he's been preaching lately."

"There's some as say," the churchwarden continued, "that a great and wonderful change has come over him. Good he always was; but so gentle, and so forgiving. And now it's like as if the mantle of the Lord had descended upon him, with the gift of awful words. 'Go, and sin no more,' was his text last Sunday; and oh, but he made us feel it! There was some of the women sobbing, and there was some of the men that felt like it; and that I know. And at the end he just repeated his text: 'Go, and sin no more,' and he lifted his hands. 'For the wages of sin is death,' he said.

Just that; and I tell you it seemed as if death was in the church, so silent it was, and so awesome."

The little churchwarden had succumbed to his own graphic description: his voice was hushed; he looked round, timorously, yet with shining eyes. Ward, with a feeling that he was committing sacrilege, pressed him to take some more mutton.

"And Mr. Morrison?" he asked. "Has he also been numbered with the prophets since I went away?"

"Well," Balding answered, "I can't rightly say. There's a change in him, too, but it's not quite the same sort of change. He's cheerful, Mr. Morrison is, as he always has been; and that's what's made him liked, yes, and loved. Yet he's different. He looks worried; that's what it is. I shouldn't wonder if he has fallen in love."

"How does Mrs. Harrington seem?" Ward asked.

"She's another that's changed," Balding said. "Of course we know why—losing her boy, and all that. But there's something in her face that I can't hardly make out. First I thought it was like as if she'd tied something round her heart, to stop it breaking; and then I thought it was as if she was seeing things that the Lord hath kept hidden from ordinary people—like the meaning of sorrow, and visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation—"

Balding did not linger unduly after dinner was over. Ward went out with him, and walked the greater part of the way to Newchurch. As he came back, he passed the little cottage where Lydia and Alice Heath had lived since their father's death. The lower story was in darkness, but upstairs, in the bedroom which they shared, there was still a light.

As he walked on, he contrasted the simple, laborious lives of these girls with the idleness and hedonism of some of the women whom he had met at Daventry. Lydia Heath had her trying day's task as a school teacher and her continued work at night in preparation for the morrow: Alice had her long round of scant-

ly paid music lessons; her tiring tramps in all weathers, to save train and car-fares; and her necessary practising. Both had, in addition, the domestic work of the cottage. Yet they remained cheerful and contented, finding their modest pleasure in the little social reunions of the district, and moving serenely and purely, though not uncomprehendingly, through surroundings often sad and sordid. Were they less subtle, he wondered, than women like Lady Winter; were their sensations more obtuse and primitive; did they suffer less acutely, and feel even joy less keenly than those who considered themselves more finely molded, more delicately organized, more intensely and perplexingly emotional? He doubted, knowing that mere neurotic waywardness is often mistaken for subtlety of intellect and character.

XIX

A TRAIN clattered into the Newchurch station, fuming steam and tawny smoke. A few people descended. The porter, placing himself at the far end of the platform, slammed the swinging doors as the train snorted out again; then, turning, he took the tickets of those who wished to pass through the barred exit. Perceiving a beckoning finger, he sauntered forward. Suddenly he became alert. The finger, he realized, belonged to Philpotts, Lord Daventry's valet. Standing slightly back was Lord Daventry himself, aquiline, unruffled, imposing.

The porter saluted. As he did so, he became aware of a third person, stalwart and impressive.

Philpotts, without speaking, pointed to a trunk and a bag.

The porter nodded. "Yes, sir," he said. "At once."

Lord Daventry was regarding the third person.

"Where," he asked himself, "have I seen that face?"

The third person was regarding Lord Daventry.

"Where," he wondered, "have I seen that nose, those green-gray eyes, those thin lips?"

Philpotts, having arranged for the delivery of the luggage, glanced at his master. Obediently, Lord Daventry moved on. Respectfully Philpotts attended him. The porter, saluting again, thought that His Lordship was less active than on the occasion of his former visit. He walked stiffly and stooped a little.

He turned to the third person, a man of about forty-five, big, blond and broad-shouldered, with a tanned face, a mustache that looked light in the sunshine and a bag that looked heavy. His clothes, though well made, were obviously not of English cut. Even his soft felt hat was able to announce that it had not been bought in London.

He pointed to his bag. "I want you to send that up to the vicarage," he said.

"Beg pardon, sir," said the porter, "but was you expected at the vicarage? Timmins, 'e's bin down with the pony trap most all day, an' yesterday, too. 'E said they was lookin' for someone, an' didn't know wot train 'e was comin' by; so 'im an' the Vicar, they just settled to meet 'em all. 'E's waitin' now, back of the 'edge."

"All right," the big man said. "He can take me up. Just bring the bag along and put it in the trap."

Lord Daventry, laboring up the hill that led to his grandson's house, deliberately considered the face of the man he had met at the station, and tried to revive the associations which would have accompanied full recognition. Suddenly, he uttered an exclamation.

"He has shaved!" he said. "Philpotts, he has shaved."

Philpotts made no remarks. Shaving was legitimate and desirable. Comment was unnecessary.

"Yes," Lord Daventry said. "When I saw him before he had a beard. Now he has only a mustache. But it is he, undoubtedly. Philpotts, I was beginning to fear that I was growing old, that my power of recollection was failing. I was mistaken. It is his beard, not my memory, that has vanished. One could scarcely be expected to recognize hairy Esau in the disguise of smooth Jacob. Eh?"

Philpotts inclined his head.

When they reached the house, Miss Sands, suspecting acid in Lord Daventry's perfectly alkaline greeting, was at once disquieted. Dr. Ward, she said, was not at home, and would certainly not be back for dinner. He had gone to a meeting in the principal town of the smokeries, and was not expected to return till late.

"A meeting, no doubt, in connection with the church?" Lord Daventry sneered.

Miss Sands flushed a little. "They've had trouble at the pits," she said. "There's been some rioting here and there, and it looks like spreading. So the owners are holding a meeting, and the men, too."

"Dr. Ward is not a colliery proprietor," Lord Daventry observed, "or a hewer of coal. What on earth has he to do with the meeting? Eh?"

"He knows the temper of the men about here," Miss Sands explained. "So he's gone to do what he can to bring about an agreement. You see, Lord Daventry, our people are so poor, and a strike or a lockout means so much misery. That is why Dr. Ward did not sit down and say he had nothing to do with the matter. He went out to see if he could help."

"Truly saintlike," Lord Daventry said. "May I ask what the trouble is about?"

"It's about snapping," Miss Sands answered promptly. Confident that Lord Daventry did not understand the meaning of the term, she waited, with a sense of superiority, to be asked to explain it.

Lord Daventry regarded her composedly. "Really?" he said. "An admirable bone of contention. But labor disputes bore me. They are so distressingly monotonous."

"So is starvation," Miss Sands returned. She was astonished at her own temerity.

Lord Daventry shrugged his shoulders. "Possibly," he said. "But I have not yet studied that question practically. It would be mere affectation for even a member of the House of Lords to

starve, at present. I have little doubt, however, that it will soon become a habit."

Miss Sands, listening, looked at the lined, expressive face. His eyes, she thought, seemed weary. She realized that he was very old.

"I will fetch you a cup of tea," she said. "It will refresh you after your long journey."

He smiled. "An old man should always be prepared for a long journey," he said.

XX

WHEN Ward came down in the morning, his grandfather, serene and satirical, was already up. It was a day of sunshine and blue skies, warm, but not enervating. The air seemed to hold in solution some agent of vitalizing keenness. Even the inevitable film of smoke was faint and translucent.

"I trust," Lord Daventry said, "that your efforts in the cause of peace were successful. It is a pity to waste such enthusiasm. And, by the way, what is 'snapping'?"

"Eating," Ward explained. "The miners are allowed half an hour for a meal. There have been disputes about it ever since the Eight Hours Bill was passed."

"And the latest disagreement is ended?" Lord Daventry asked. "Your eloquence has oiled the ruffled billows?"

"I don't know," Ward said. "I'm afraid there may be more trouble. But it is smoothed over for the present, in this neighborhood at least."

They went in to breakfast.

"You have not asked me," Lord Daventry observed, "the reason for this hurried visit."

"No," Ward answered. "If you have come for a special purpose, you will tell me, I presume. If you have come merely to reinspect the pigsties and criticise the district generally, Marple will be at your service whenever I am busy. In any event, you know that I am always glad to see you."

"I believe you are," the old man said. "Heaven knows why. But I will tell

you the reason for this intrusion. Curiosity. I have not come to argue with you, or to appeal to you. I have come to watch the entertainment and amuse myself with the spectacle of a strong-willed man, of saintly habits, crawling in the mud at the whim of a sensual woman."

"That would certainly amuse you," Ward rejoined. "But why have you come here? No entertainment of that kind has been advertised."

"I have followed the lady," Lord Daventry said. "*Cherchez la femme*—it is a wise saying. For where the woman is, there also will be the devil—or the devil to pay. Eh?"

Ward's look of inquiry perplexed him. He reflected for a moment.

"You did not know," he said, "that Lady Winter, after leaving Daventry, came straight to her sister here?"

"When?" Ward asked.

"Two days ago. You have not heard from her?"

Ward did not answer, and the old man went on. "You soon will, then. I assure you, she has come here deliberately to continue the game which you both found so enjoyable at Daventry. She is a woman of singular character, John; a dangerous and delightful woman; very persistent in pursuit, very selfish and quite without conscience—in fact, truly modern. But you must not let me interfere with your pleasant comedy. If you desire to damn yourself, you could not select a more charming companion—or one with wider and more helpful experience, probably."

"Do you know anything about this 'experience,'" Ward inquired, "or are you drawing conclusions from the one casual glimpse in New York that you told me about?"

"I am drawing conclusions from my own rather extensive experience of the sex," Lord Daventry said. "I am usually considered a good judge of women."

"Of superficialities," Ward said coldly. After a pause, he added: "I am sorry you should couple Lady Winter's name with mine."

The old man sneered openly. "Bah!" he said. "Why this pretense? Do you think you have escaped, that the danger

is over? Eh? It is only just commencing. This is not an ordinary woman. I will do her the justice to say that she is not even extraordinary. She is herself. I cannot help wishing that I had been able to meet her in my own unregenerate days. As for you, my dear Saint John, what can you do? You want her. She wants you. I should have more confidence even in"—he paused and shrugged his shoulders—"George. He is too asinine to appreciate the charms of subtle deviltry. But you are more seducible. Your saintliness will only lead you into a wanton's arms."

"Shall I ring for some more coffee?" Ward asked.

"Before you call in the admirable Sands," Lord Daventry said, "let me mention a peculiar coincidence. You remember, evidently, the little story I told you about meeting Lady Winter and her husband in New York." He paused, half closing his eyes, as if visualizing the scene more completely. "It is odd," he continued, "that while the wife is so affectionately visiting her sister in this inviting neighborhood, the husband should also be paying a visit to someone. At least, I presume so. I saw him at the station yesterday when I arrived. He had a portmanteau with him. Interesting, eh?"

"You are quite sure?" Ward asked.

"Quite," the old man affirmed. "He has discarded his beard since I last saw him, but his identity is unmistakable. Really," he added, "it was very thoughtful of him to come. Everything is now ready for the comedy to proceed. We have the willful wife, the ardent lover, and the stern, sad husband: the usual and universal three. Eh?"

Ward rose. "There will be no comedy," he said coldly.

"Take care," Lord Daventry rejoined, "that there is not a tragedy instead. I distrust a coincidence—when it takes the form of a husband."

Ward went into his study. He looked at his letters. Among them was one from Lady Winter. It was the first she had written to him. Indeed, he did not know, until he had opened it, that

it came from her, for he had never seen her handwriting. He considered it now, carefully. Each of the characters was formed distinctly, with a thick, even stroke or curve. The rounded script—smooth but heavy—astonished him. He had expected angularity, lightness and a flowing style. Yet, as the written lines impressed themselves upon him, he realized that his first vague idea had been wrong. Her personality was in these supple outlines. He began to imagine her in black velvet, framing the whiteness of her throat. . . .

The letter was short. It was undated. No address was given, and no prefix used. He read it slowly:

I came back yesterday, and shall stay here for a week. Will you see me, once?

You will be glad to know that my sister is almost happy. Mr. Harrington seems wonderfully changed. He is quite gentle and thoughtful. I tell you this because it is through you that it has happened. Do you remember that strange meeting, when you found my pencil?

That was all. He put the letter in his pocket, glanced through the rest of his correspondence and went into the surgery.

He did not meet his grandfather again until lunch. The old man seemed wayward, passing from benignity to petulance, and from petulance to unusually bitter criticism. He was evidently in a state of nervous unrest. Ward had never known him to be so variable, and he was glad when the meal was over. Lord Daventry, after a brief rest, borrowed Marple and the car and went out, as he said unkindly, to breathe the fresh smoke. A little later Morrison called.

"I have heard," he said, "that that formidable person, your grandfather, has returned. As I am going away tomorrow for a bit, I thought it would cheer the dear old man up if I presented myself for his benediction. He will be delighted, I know, to see the last of me."

Ward explained that Lord Daventry was then inspecting the atmosphere.

The curate was disappointed. "I may not have another opportunity," he said. "I should have liked to see him. His Cynicism has captured my heart—or, at least, a portion of the part that I reserve for the convenience of my friends.

A man who is in love has to limit his—shall we say, cardiac generosity?" He patted Ward's arm. "You unemotional people cannot understand the charm of being quite young and foolish and superbly wise. Of course, many people who are in love are merely idiotic. They believe they have achieved something which nobody else has ever really understood. I have met men who raved about the unparalleled paragons they were going to marry, and who evidently pitied the remainder of the universe, shut out from the one amazing and only desirable girl. That kind of thing is irritating. I have no sympathy with it. But I don't mind confiding to you, in strict confidence, that if you want to see a girl who is absolutely, utterly and transcendently peerless, you must let me introduce you to the future Mrs. Morrison."

"You mean Alice Heath, without doubt," Ward said gravely.

"It is impossible for perfection to remain anonymous," the Curate answered.

"There seems to be an epidemic of engagements," Ward said. "There is yourself; there is Lydia Heath—your future sister-in-law—and Harry Poole; I rather suspect that Miss Sands is going to desert me in order to save Balding from dyspepsia and a shattered heart; and Marple, whom I considered impregnable, asked me yesterday if I could increase his wages, as the date for the fatal ceremony had been fixed."

"It is a wonderful world," Morrison said. "Think of so many people walking hand in hand with happiness! And by the way," he added, "I was at Clayfield the other evening. Harrington seems very different. He's given up drinking. All his flabbiness has gone. His face is firm, his eyes are clear and he's in first rate condition. He looks more like he must have done when he was a young man. I can understand now what has always puzzled me before—how his wife could ever have fallen in love with him. Mrs. Harrington looked happier, I thought. She's closer to her husband than she has been for years."

He jumped up suddenly. "I nearly forgot to tell you!" he cried. "Did you

know that Harold Thorpe had come home again?"

"I knew he was expected," Ward said quietly. "And so he's really here at last? Dear old Vicar! It will mean a great deal to him."

"Yes," Morrison agreed. "But I'm afraid the Vicar's not quite what he used to be. He's an old man, and he shows it. He's seemed a trifle odd at times, too. Harold's appearance will do him a lot of good, though."

"When did Harold come?" Ward asked.

"Yesterday," the Curate answered. "The Vicar would be glad if you'd drop in any evening, I know."

XXI

LORD DAVENTRY was very quiet in the evening, and soon after nine o'clock he retired to his own room. Ward, left alone, was vaguely restless. He began to read a new novel by a local author of distinction; but the utter sameness of the story wearied him in his unusual mood. He picked up instead a volume of Ibsen's plays, and turned to "Ghosts." His attention still wandered. He went to his bookcase and took out a copy of Shelley. He read only a few passages, and put the book back.

He thought of Lady Winter. Her letter was still in his pocket. Its mere existence seemed to diffuse sensuousness. He recalled her violet eyes, her voice, her wonderful physical beauty. Surely it was a form of genius to reveal such loveliness.

With an effort of will, he dismissed the images, and began to consider the return of Harold Thorpe, in conjunction with Lord Daventry's recognition, at the station, of Lady Winter's husband. The coincidence was significant.

He looked at his watch. It was nearly eleven o'clock. He walked to the window, twisted a slat of the Venetian blinds and peered through the narrow opening. The night was dark. On the crest of the hill he could see the lights of the Chayle colliery. But the structure supporting the huge winding wheel was

blotted by the shadows. He thought of the men working in the subterranean gloom.

He turned away. It was bedtime, and he felt tired. Yet his restlessness increased. He was affected by the nearness of the woman he had loved; by her letter to him; by his grandfather's sudden visit and sarcastic comments; even by Harold Thorpe's arrival. But some other influence, apart from the happenings of the day, was also swaying him, urging him to action. He had a sense of some threatened catastrophe, which must be averted. But his inspiration was vague. He felt, but did not comprehend.

He closed his eyes. In the darkness, a picture gradually developed. He saw a man running, running. . . .

All hesitation left him. He walked into the hall, picked up a cap and a stick, unlocked the front door quietly, and went out. He opened the great iron gate, and turned to the path across the fields. The air was chilly, but quite still. The sky was clouded, and moonless.

He had crossed halfway to the vicarage when he suddenly bent his head and peered forward. The vision of a man running recurred, and with it a faint noise of movement. The image became definite, and the sound, though muffled, unmistakable. He heard breathing; recognized the runner; threw out an arresting arm.

"Well?" he said.

The runner stopped, breathing quickly. "My God!" he said. "You here!" It was Morrison.

He touched Ward with a trembling hand.

"You knew?" he asked. "You were coming?"

"You might almost say, without fear of contradiction, that I have come," Ward rejoined.

"I don't understand it," Morrison said. "I was running to fetch you—and you are here! It—it's odd."

"Better not wait," Ward said, moving on as he spoke.

The Curate turned, walking with short, swift steps that kept pace with

Ward's longer and more deliberate strides. He jerked out words and sentences as they went. It was evident that he had difficulty in controlling his voice.

"It's Thorpe," he said—"Harold Thorpe. Dead. Horrible. His poor father. Balding was there—saw it. I saw it. Ran to fetch you. Why haven't we telephones? Ought to have. A dead man. Couldn't reach you. Had to run. Shot. A frightful thing."

Ward did not speak. They came to the vicarage gate and passed through the garden. The door of the house was open. Morrison led the way in. Ward closed the door noiselessly, and followed Morrison into the Vicar's study on the ground floor.

On an old-fashioned upholstered couch, Harold Thorpe lay, inert, tranquil. It was difficult to realize that he was dead. The Vicar was kneeling at the foot of the couch; he seemed to be praying, though his lips did not move. Balding, the churchwarden, stood in the middle of the room; his face no longer looked ruddy, and he was opening and closing his left hand nervously.

Ward bent over the recumbent body and made a brief examination. When he had finished, he turned and looked inquiringly at Balding. The churchwarden continued to open and close his hand.

The Vicar rose slowly. He seemed very old and haggard.

"It was I," he said. "I shot him. Shot him. My son. I cannot tell you how, now. Balding will tell you. I will go to my room while he tells you. I will go to my room and pray. I do not feel able to listen." He turned, falteringly. Morrison, glancing at Ward, supported the old man and led him from the room.

Ward turned to Balding, when they had gone. "Better tell me all about it," he said. "Sit down first."

"No," the churchwarden said. "I'd rather stand. I feel restless, and standing'll ease me. It's a terrible thing that's happened, Doctor—a sad and terrible thing. Not for a thousand pounds would I have had it happen." He walked toward the couch, but stopped abruptly, his eyes twitching.

"Don't hurry," Ward said. "But don't be too slow."

"It was like this, sir," the churchwarden said. "The Vicar, he asked me to dinner to meet Mr. Harold again. I wondered why, but he'd his own reasons, as it turned out. Very quiet he was at dinner, and so was Mr. Harold, for all the millions of money I'm told he's been making. And after dinner we came in here, sir; the Vicar and Mr. Harold and Mr. Morrison and me. It was late; we'd been sitting in the dining room a long time, and it seemed to me I ought to be getting home. I said so, but the Vicar, he wouldn't hear of it. 'No,' he said. 'I want you, Balding. I've something to say before you go, and something to do, perhaps.' And he had. It's done now, God help us, and can't be undone. We must bow our heads humbly, for well we know that all flesh is as grass and life but the wind that moves it, in a manner of speaking. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. But," he added grimly, "He hasn't taken away the body, and there'll be sore trouble, Doctor, and shame and sorrow before it's in its coffin and the coffin in the grave and the dead at rest, so quiet, till the trumpets sound."

"Was there a quarrel?" Ward asked.

The churchwarden shook his head. "This is how it was," he said. "The Vicar turned to his son, and, 'Harold,' he says, 'I've something to say to you, and I'll ask you to listen and think it over very carefully and slowly before you decide what to answer. And these gentlemen will listen, too,' he says, 'and bear witness before God that I have tried to do my duty as His servant and a shepherd, unworthy as I am, of His sheep.' And he turned to me. 'Balding,' he says, 'I've asked you to be present because you are a tried friend and a leader in our little community.' Those were his words. 'You have seen the sin,' he says, 'and the scandal and the sorrow; and you shall know this night that our God is a God of righteousness; and though He will have mercy, and not sacrifice, He will have justice also, and will demand a reckoning from the faithless and worldly.'"

The little churchwarden had raised his voice. His glance fell upon the couch, and he was silent for a moment. Then he continued quietly: "I mustn't keep you waiting, Doctor; but I want you to know just how it happened. Well, the Vicar turned to his son. 'Harold,' he says, 'you know the affection that I have for you. You know how I have been looking forward to your return since that first letter, many weeks ago, when you told me of your success and your intention to come home. Your welfare is very dear to me; I am proud even of your worldly achievements, of the position you have gained. But there is one thing that is dearer to me than the prosperity of my own son; and that is the will of God, and the salvation of His children, here and hereafter.' Never," the churchwarden added, "have I seen the Vicar look so noble and so sad. 'Harold,' he says, 'there is a girl in the village who would have been a sweet and God-fearing woman, if her life had not been wrecked for the idle pleasure of a man. Nay, my son, I know and I understand: nature and weak will and selfishness. Yes. But one must pay for these things. There are some women, alas, so inherently vicious that the wickedness of man can taint them no further. But this was a very different case. The girl was a good girl, a bonny girl, and pure in her thoughts. And now, my son, she is a byword in the village, a slattern, a drunkard, a woman without hope, without honor, without decency. I go amongst my people, and in their hearts they say: 'Who is this that preaches to us? See what evil his son has wrought; and he goes free, without reproach or punishment.' It shall no longer be so said, or thought. You have come home, successful, influential. And I say to you, my son, just what God has put into my heart. You have sinned. Atone, so far as you can atone. Not with the careless charity of careless men: you shall not fling a few pounds, or a few hundreds of pounds, to this woman, and count yourself free. What she is, you have made her. What she will be, and shall be, yet, you must

make her, too. You took your pleasure when her face was fair and her ways were winsome. Take her now, my son, from the mire; soften her hardened heart; teach her again the meaning of decency, of purity and of faith. That shall be your punishment. It shall also be your exceeding reward. Will men jeer, do you think, or women sneer? What matter if they do? But they will not. Never will you be so respected as when you have made this woman your wife, and never so happy. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'"

Ward looked at Balding in astonishment, for the little man was acting, not narrating.

"Mr. Harold just stood there," the churchwarden went on, "and looked at his father. For quite a long time he stood there, and never said a word. And at last, 'You mean Nancy?' he asks. 'You really want me to marry Nancy? You would receive her as a daughter?' 'Yes,' says the Vicar, 'and gladly.' 'I'm sorry,' says Mr. Harold, 'but I can't marry her.' And he stands looking at the Vicar, and the Vicar stands looking at him. And then the Vicar puts his hand into his pocket—you can imagine, Doctor, we'd no idea what was coming—and he pulls out a revolver, poor old man, and he points it at Mr. Harold. We was afraid to move, for fear he'd fire it. Mr. Morrison, he tried to say something; but the Vicar wouldn't listen. 'This is between my son and myself and God,' he says; and he speaks again to Mr. Harold, who couldn't help a smile at the revolver. 'I have prayed,' he says, 'over this matter. It has been with me night and day, night and day. And I say to you, you *shall* marry that woman. Give me your promise now, or in the name of God I will inflict the punishment that is due. For the wages of sin is death.' And Mr. Harold, he looks at his father. He wasn't thinking of the revolver, you could tell that; he was thinking of what the Vicar'd

said, and the way he'd said it, like a prophet in Israel. 'Upon my word,' he says, 'I believe I would do it if I could; and I'm honestly sorry I cannot.' 'And why not?' says the Vicar. 'I'm not free,' Mr. Harold says quietly. 'I'm married.' And the Vicar gave a sudden start, convulsive like; sure I am that he never meant to do it, but his finger was on the trigger, and—the bullet went home."

Ward nodded.

"Where are the servants?" he asked. "Do they know anything about what has happened?"

"They don't seem to have heard the shot," Balding answered. "They were upstairs—in bed and asleep, most likely."

"Give me the revolver," Ward said.

Balding handed it to him.

"There'll be an inquest," the churchwarden said gloomily. "Everything'll come out in public. And the Vicar'll be arrested, I suppose. Frightful. And I didn't even know he ever had a revolver. It wasn't in his nature. Why, he wouldn't 'a' shot an armed burglar, he wouldn't, to save his own life. He must 'a' bought the pistol specially, just for this purpose. He'd been brooding a long time. Poor old man!"

"Don't worry," Ward said quietly. "Harold was not shot."

"What!" cried the churchwarden. "You don't say!" He sat down. "I don't understand," he said. "How did he come by his death? Was it the hand of God Almighty Himself?"

"Yes," Ward said. "We give it another name medically, but it comes to the same thing." He had taken the cartridges from the revolver. Mechanically, he put them back.

"But there was the Vicar with his pistol!" Balding said. "And then the shot. Sir, if that shot didn't kill Mr. Harold, only God Himself could have done it, at that moment—God or His angel, like the angel with the drawn sword that stood against Balaam."

"Harold hasn't a mark on him," Ward said. "These are blank cartridges. Death was due to heart failure—the result of the sudden shock, of

course, but led up to by years of self-poisoning with alcohol and nicotine."

"You don't say!" the churchwarden muttered. He was thinking for the moment of his own profitable inn and its staple commodities.

"The simplest thing in the world," Ward said; "and, naturally, the most unexpected."

The excitement that had sustained Balding had passed; he seemed suddenly nerveless and dispirited. Ideas no longer surged in upon him: he began to grope for them. "I'm glad, for the Vicar's sake," he said. "And so Mr. Harold just died of his own self, in a manner of speaking? You wouldn't 'a' thought it, would you—the big, strong man that he seemed! Well, I'm truly glad for the Vicar. It's bad enough for him to lose his son. But wouldn't it 'a' been terrible if he'd killed him himself! Poor old man, he thinks he did. I suppose he'd forgotten about the blank cartridges. P'raps he didn't rightly think about the matter at all. Poor, poor old man! He's been so worried lately he'd be likely to think anything."

Ward went again to the couch. When he had made his previous examination, he had noticed a little locket attached to the watchchain. Now he opened it. Inside was a miniature of a woman's head.

The head was Lady Winter's. He knew now that Harold Thorpe was her husband. He had suspected so as soon as Morrison had told him of Harold's arrival, coinciding with Lord Daven-try's recognition of the millionaire he had met in New York. He surveyed with curious interest the body of the man whom she had loved, or imagined she loved. This inert shape had once held magic for her; the arms had enfolded her. Life for a little while had been transformed, because of this thing that was dead.

He took out the miniature, put it in his pocketbook and closed the locket. When he turned round, the Vicar and Morrison had reentered the room. The old man did not seem to see him. The shock of the catastrophe and the whole strain of the evening had been

more than he could continue to endure, and he was now in a state of semistupor. He looked vacantly at the couch. The sight of his son's body revived for a moment the distress of the tragedy; he tried to speak, but his utterance was disconnected. The Curate led him gently to a chair.

Ward explained briefly to Morrison about the actual cause of death. "It's no good telling the Vicar now. He would not comprehend. Please get him to bed, Morrison. He is exhausted and will sleep like a child. Perhaps he will be troublesome in the morning; look after him till I come. Balding, you will go home. I shall lock the door of this room and take the key with me. Harold won't mind dispensing with watchers. He is too big now, or too little, to worry about formalities. I will communicate with the coroner and see if we can't avoid an inquest."

Morrison did not answer. Carefully he led the Vicar from the room. Balding followed. Ward glanced again at the body on the couch. In spite of his medical training and experience, the translation of life into death still perplexed him. Could the dignity of man be other than trivial, when at any one of the moments in his years so small a chance could reduce him to utter silence, conquering his will, shattering his purpose and delivering him as carrion to the cleansing worms?

There came to him the old curious feeling of being caught in the toils of a relentless system, which no human effort could modify. The sense of impotence was oppressive. With an almost involuntary gesture of the hand, as in brusque farewell to the dead, he went out and locked the door. It seemed to him that he had been closing doors persistently throughout the evening.

XXII

For the first time within Miss Sands's experience, Ward did not come down for breakfast. No one disturbed him. Lord Daventry made one sarcastic comment, and relapsed into silence.

When he emerged, Miss Sands had disappeared, and his second effort was wasted. He took refuge in Philpotts, and Philpotts took him into the fresh air and consigned him to the care of Marple. A little run in the machine, he considered, would do His Lordship good.

News of the strange event had passed swiftly through the whole neighborhood, with inevitable exaggeration and distortion. The sudden death of Harold Thorpe was variously attributed to natural, if startling, conditions, such as an apoplectic seizure; to the mania of the girl Nancy, frenzied by her wrongs, her long degradation and her slavery to alcohol; or to a secret emissary of the Black Hand, who had dogged the footsteps of the millionaire from far America and ruthlessly settled some uncomprehended feud. But no word had leaked out connecting the Vicar with his son's death, though many remembered and repeated awesomely the prophecies from the pulpit, the somber warnings of the wages of sin. Ward's association with the tragedy had been invested with every element of the eerie and mysterious: he had foreseen, foretold; had hastened to prevent the slaying, but had failed by moments.

Marple, the taciturn, had heard rumors, which he was unable to resist transmitting to Lord Daventry as they drove slowly on the Newchurch road. The old man, unaccustomed to conversation with his chauffeur, was at first negligent and unresponsive; but as he pieced together the fragments that reached him his manner changed: he leaned forward, alert, receptive, and finally ordered that the car be stopped, so that he could hear without distraction the whole story. When the tale was finished, he told Marple to drive to the vicarage, where he had a brief interview with Morrison, and with the coroner.

Ward came down for luncheon, offering no excuses for his late appearance. He was astonished at Miss Sands's attitude. She regarded him with timidity, yet her eyes revealed the outreaching

of emotion with which sensitive women approach any manifestation of spiritual mysteries. Involuntarily, her thoughts passed from her employer to Balding. A faint flush came to her cheeks as she realized that she had really been trying to look upon the churchwarden as a possible suitor. She felt that she had outraged her own womanliness. Measured by the standard of the man before her, the little rotund publican and pillar of the church became grotesquely impossible. In that instant Balding's fate was decided, irrevocably, and the housekeeper dedicated herself to her vocation, not less spiritual than practical.

Lord Daventry regarded his grandson moodily. Lunch was almost finished before he permitted himself to speak.

"You've given them something to think about," the old man said.

"To tattle about," Ward answered. "But what does it all mean? Something happened last night. I'm an ordinary man. But last night, for instance, something came to me. I don't know what you call it. It just took me, flooded me, swept me on. I wasn't guessing; I knew—knew what was going to happen, as one knows what has happened already. And there have been other things—over and over again—"

"Do you," the old man asked, "always see the future—or do you go back? Do you see things in the past—not the recent past, but long ago; things that have not happened to you, in this life, but may have happened before?"

"Yes, I have gone back," Ward said. "But I could understand that—in part, at least. But the future—"

"The thing has happened before in our family," the old man said. "You know that. Now it has cropped out again. I don't see anything particularly perplexing in it. You're just a highly sensitized receiver—under certain conditions, anyway. You're very much *en rapport* with that curious world beyond the threshold that we're only beginning to investigate. Imagine the

inhabitants of that world, with their freedom and range of motion, their developed intelligence. They can probe where we should be blind; they can carry the game of probabilities to a much finer point than we can. They try to warn us, for they are interested in our world: they have been here. But what can they do? There's nothing on our side to receive their wireless messages. Sometimes one almost gets across; and we hear about a premonition of a dream. But as a rule the effort is wasted. Here, they find you: there's something about you—mental or physical, electric or psychic—a little more phosphorous, a little less acid—an extra cell—perhaps a brain convolution—anyway you're different. They can make you understand. You're the receiver for their messages."

"That's pretty much the explanation I had worked out," Ward said.

"And yet—" He stopped, and his eyes seemed to be following some movement.

"What are you looking at?" his grandfather asked, watching him.

Ward did not answer. A picture was forming itself before him—a picture that he had seen before, of a woman in a darkened room. With a straining movement of the head, he threw off the obsession, as if it were physical.

"I must go out," he said. "There are several things I should have done—early. It was silly to sleep when the world was wide awake." He moved to the door. "Would you care to come with me?"

"If you are thinking of the coroner and the affair at the vicarage," Lord Daventry said, "you need not bother. I have settled all that—so far as it can be settled at present."

"Thank you," Ward said. "I was wondering why he hadn't turned up before now."

"I told him not to disturb you," Lord Daventry said.

Ward glanced at him. He knew that the old man's consideration, curtly expressed, conveyed deep feeling.

They drove to the vicarage, which presented an air of dreariness and op-

pression, as if devitalized by human consciousness of the tragedy that had taken place. It was a windless day, and the stillness of the trees, the utter quietude of the garden, increased the impression of gloom.

Morrison met them and remained with Lord Daventry while Ward went in to look again at the dead man. He locked the door when he came out, and gave the key to Morrison. Afterward they all went up to see the Vicar, who was sitting in an easy chair in his bedroom. His mind was still not clear. He scarcely noticed the visit; did not speak at all; seemed lethargic, without initiative.

Lord Daventry was glad to get away; even Morrison's chatter—he had resumed a little of his customary vivacity—could scarcely penetrate the somberness in which the whole place was enveloped.

Ward commenced his round of professional visits. It was late when they returned home, and dinner was ready.

XXIII

"I WONDER," Lord Daventry said, looking at his coffee, "whether Harold Thorpe was married? Perhaps he had a wife who will outwardly mourn, and inwardly rejoice, at this unexpected and permanent separation. Eh? It has occurred to me that Harold's homecoming and the arrival of my friend the millionaire from America may prove to be so closely connected that it would be difficult to separate the two occurrences. Eh?"

"You are quite right," Ward said. "Harold was your millionaire. When he is buried, you will be able to forget him."

"I never forget," the old man said. "Sometimes I refuse to remember. That is a very different thing."

The surgery bell rang.

Ward rose. "I will answer that ring myself," he said.

He walked through his consulting room into the surgery and opened the outer door. He saw two figures. For

a moment he did not identify them. Then he recognized Lady Winter and James Harrington.

He moved to one side, without speaking, and they came in. He closed the door.

In the light of the surgery lamp, Lady Winter looked pale and tired.

"You did not answer my note," she said. "So I have come to my doctor's surgery, like any other patient."

Harrington's eyes were searching Ward's face persistently.

"It's a strange tale men are telling of you, Dr. Ward," he said.

"In what way?" Ward asked.

"In Christ's way, I'm thinking," Harrington answered, slowly. "Leastwise, not in any way that ordinary folk are familiar with. 'Twill be a long time before people hereabouts forget the story."

Ward made no reply.

"You wished to see me?" he said, to Lady Winter.

"Yes," she answered, looking into his eyes.

He took her into the consulting room. Harrington remained in the surgery.

XXIV

SHE would not sit down at first, but stood near him, following him, half unconsciously, when he moved away. The action jarred his strained nerves. He moved a chair forward.

"If you will sit down, I shall be able to listen to you. If you insist on standing, please be as brief as possible."

"Nerves out of order?" she asked, settling herself in the chair.

"I am all right," he answered. "It's the universe that is out of order, for the moment." He laughed; then closed his lips, and waited.

She did not speak for some time, but watched him. Her right hand, resting on the arm of the chair, began to beat a tattoo.

"Please don't," he said curtly.

"More trouble with the universe?" she asked.

He did not answer.

"You don't ask why I have come to see you," she said after a little while.

"Why should I ask?" he answered. "You will tell me when it suits you. I can wait. I am not curious."

She looked at him again for some time, as if trying to fathom his mood.

"I came to you," she said, "because you would not come to me. You see, I am a woman."

"I understand," he said.

"I believe you do," she said. "You understand so many things that you may even understand what a woman never understands: herself. Of course, your grandfather thinks that he understands. He classifies all women as good or bad. He doesn't know any intermediate stage. I suppose he is very clever to have lived so long, and realized so little. Women are never in anything else *but* an intermediate stage. That sounds funny, but it's true. They are always going up or coming down. Of course, I mean real women, not pre-Victorian survivals. The best woman in the world has had streaks; but she won't admit it. The worst woman has good streaks; but she doesn't advertise."

She spoke rapidly and restlessly, watching Ward's face. He stood quite still, waiting.

"You don't help me much," she said. Then the feeling of futility passed. She was silent, in her turn, for a little while. At last, quite composedly, she asked:

"Will you tell me the true cause of Harold Thorpe's death?"

"Heart failure, due to a sudden shock."

"I thought he was stronger," she said; and added: "He was my husband."

Ward nodded.

"Yes."

"You knew?" she asked, but without surprise.

"Yes; I knew."

"I wonder," she said, "whether there are any papers or photographs that might connect me publicly with Harold?"

"I don't think you need worry," he said.

"Perhaps you consider me selfish," she said. "You may wonder why I do not show more emotion. Harold has been dead to me for a long time. Indeed, he never lived. I did not love him. I loved something that my imagination created. But that something never had any existence apart from my imagination. The actual reality was very different, and very distressing."

"You did not get a divorce?" he asked.

"No."

"Why not?"

"I did not care for publicity—unless it became absolutely necessary."

"Well, you have your divorce now," he said. "Final and unrestricted."

"Yes," she said. "I am free now."

He looked down upon her. The words irritated him; yet he could see in them a deeper meaning than the obvious one. He knew her history. She had not drawn much, so far, from life's lottery: a loveless marriage with an old man; and then a marriage of a moment with a careless libertine. Her girlhood had been fettered by poverty and narrow duties. She had been held in by dwarfing conventions which hedged the letter of the moral law with a false divinity and ignored the spirit. It was time that she began to feel free at last, knowing the realities of good and evil, and walking in the path that she herself had chosen and desired. And yet, was there any real freedom? Could human will ever escape completely from inherited shackles, conquer environment and habit, and mold a new destiny?

"You have a curious trick of looking right through people," she said. "What is it you see? The future?"

"Not always the future," he answered.

"Sometimes the past, and sometimes nothing."

"You are a strange man," she said.

"I have always known that. You frighten me, and yet you hold me. I cannot get away from you. God knows, I don't want to. I came to you tonight because I couldn't wait. I want to know what my life is going to be. I

have heard people talking about you, wherever I went; talking of this strange gift of yours. James told me all about your having foreseen Harold Thorpe's death. I have never known anyone so moved.

"Oh, my dear," she said, "can't you see what it all means to a woman? I have loved you from the beginning—loved you, and been afraid of you—loved you because I was afraid of you, perhaps. You were so still and strong. You had strange ways. You talked of the past and the future, and I did not know what you meant. And now you seem like a prophet or a saint; and yet you are not weak or womanish—just a man. You're not the monkish type, the old type I could never come near to, meek and holy and unsexed. You can be harsh and cruel. You have passions, needs, humanness. You understand the devil, and yet you walk with God.

"Oh," she cried, "what are you going to do with me? I want you. I cannot do without you. And once you seemed to love me. Didn't you? Was it a mistake? Or were you afraid of something? Did you see something, with that terrible gift of yours? What was it that you spoke about by the lake at Daventry? Darkness—you said; and lights that went out. And that strange dream afterward—the night that you called me, and I seemed to come to you—wanted to come to you. The strange room—and then the darkness. Always, the darkness! What does it mean? Tell me."

As he stood and looked at her, all the passion that had drawn him toward her from their first meeting flamed in him again, intense and urgent. It seemed futile to resist an attraction so overwhelming, based on some fundamental correspondence of their natures. Was he to struggle always, and always, in the end, surrender? Destiny or chance, prevision or delusion—could he even now distinguish with certainty between them?

Eternity seemed to spread sections before him, and mock him with the moment. The life of man was one drop

of rain. Did it count in the flowing river twisting forward to the sea?

"Yes," he said. "It counts. Counts forever."

He had spoken aloud. She looked at him wonderingly.

"What counts?"

"Everything," he answered. "You and I. The moment. The past. The future."

"Can't we make our own future?" she asked.

"We are going to," he said. "Child, you and I must begin to be grown up. We can't be children always. We must live the grown-up life."

"I want to," she said. "A bigger and more beautiful life than I ever used to dream of. That is why I came to you—a woman to her lover. For I am grown up at last. I don't want to explain away the past, or to excuse it, or to forget it. I know I have not been normal. I know I am not normal now. I don't wish to be normal. I wish to be myself, always; but the best self, not the worst self. And even at my worst, I think I have been better than many women who live perfectly respectable lives and tell perfectly respectable lies; women who imagine they have not done things because they will not admit having done them; who cheat themselves even in their thoughts—afraid to recognize their own natures, their own desires, their own passions. I have been frank with myself. That is all. Is it a very terrible thing?"

"We must not evade the issue," he said. "We may be frank with ourselves. We may despise the small deceptions. We may see far and clearly. But we are decadent—you and I."

"Decadent?" she repeated. "You said that once before, I remember—that I was decadent." She spoke simply, without anger or resentment.

"We are both decadent," he said. "It doesn't help us that thousands of others are worse than we are; have less grip, less intellect. If we are worth anything, we must be frank all through. It's no good my telling myself that I have lived decently and done some work. It's quite true. But

there's something else. I have to look underneath the surface—at the dreams, the passion, the fever. . . . Other men have their rough times. But this is something different. . . .”

“You are sure?” she asked.

“I ought to know,” he answered. “It's the devil of heredity. But in this case the name of the devil is legion.”

“And are there no angels?” she asked.

“Surely, with your strange gift—seeing the future like a prophet of God—catching glimpses of the long-dead past—don't you feel that you outvalue the little men—that you are too big for rules and regulations and restrictions—that the good in you is far too vast to be buried by the evil?”

“I see what I know to be right,” he answered. “I want to choose it—as Christ chose it, accepting the crucifixion of the humanity in him, beautiful as it was, for the sake of the something that was finer and more real.”

“But I thought it was all discarded—this old asceticism, this denunciation of the flesh, this monkish self-scourging. It seems so false and futile to me, so cowardly.”

“It isn't the flesh we denounce—it is the tainted flesh, the tainted brain.”

“God meant us to live our own lives,” she said. “We may be handicapped by the past. We may be tainted, as you call it. But we can rise beyond the handicap, beyond the taint. It isn't brave to fling oneself away because one's great-great-grandfather was willful and wicked, or even because one has been wicked oneself. It isn't right. I don't care what tendencies we may have. We can overcome them.”

“Perhaps,” he said. “But I must accept for myself what I proclaim for others. I don't believe that the vicious should perpetuate themselves—the criminal, the imbecile, the diseased. We may not like it; but we might not like being born Hottentots, or pigs. We have to accept our nature—make the best of it, of course, but accept it. The world is going to the devil through sentimentality, self-pity, self-excusing, self-exemption. Some of us have to do the

right thing, even if we pay a price that seems unfair.”

“But why should we always look back or forward? Cannot we take something on trust?”

“I know,” he said. “I know. But when the night comes—and the darkness?”

“Always the darkness!” she said. “Why do you repeat the word? What is it that you have seen?”

He did not answer. She rose, and came to him.

“Oh, my dear,” she said, “tell me. I want to know everything. I'm not afraid. I only want to know. Tell me what it is that has happened in the past—if anything has happened. Tell me what it is that is waiting in the future. I don't care. Nothing matters—but you. Why won't you answer? Am I so terrible to you? Dear, I love you so much, so very much. I don't think anyone in the world has ever been loved as I love you. If you are afraid of me, and afraid of yourself—isn't there something that we can do? Can't we rise beyond this destiny that glowers at us—beyond ourselves—and find out something that is different from the little everyday life, bigger and better and finer? I don't want the ordinary life. I will give up all that most people mean by love. But I want to be near you always; to feel that I belong to you, that you love me and want me and are glad to have me. Oh, my dear, this is bigger and better than I am. I am lost in it. It carries me away. I can see only beauty, loveliness everywhere, flooding the world. Dear, there is a mystery in sex. We know there is. It pervades the universe. Isn't it vaster and more wonderful than our little thoughts have imagined it? Our foolish customs and habits and conventions have only touched the fringe of it. Can't we give up the outside things and take the things that matter—the spirit of love, the soul, the essence?”

“I believe that some men and women could do it,” he answered. “They could give up the symbols and retain the reality. They could live together and find the ideal of love in complete com-

radeship. But we couldn't do it. At any rate, I couldn't. I'm three-quarters animal. I don't condemn the animal. I like it, in its proper place. But mine isn't the right kind of animalism. It's wrong. Altogether wrong."

"Can't we try?" she asked. "Even if we fail—would it matter very much?"

"Please sit down," he said. "Yes, it would matter. It has mattered before, and it will matter again and forever. We've got to break out of the habit of giving way."

"There's something you haven't told me," she said. "Something that frightens you—for my sake, not your own. You'd take the risk then. Any man would. Please tell me. There was a dream—a vision, or something. Lights, and then darkness. I want to know. You've no right to send me away and keep the truth from me. What is it? Are you afraid I should change? Or drag you down? Or that you would drag me down?" She watched his eyes. "You are afraid you would hurt me. Is that it? Ah, I can see! What was it that came to me that strange night, when you put your will into me? What was it? You hurt me. Yes. In the darkness. Is that it? You are afraid you would hurt me—kill me perhaps? As if that mattered! Dear, if I've only been with you, I don't care what happens." She laughed, leaning against him, pressing him to her.

The room grew dark to him. He could see nothing, hear only a sound of breathing. Then he felt his fingers on her throat.

As the mist cleared from his eyes, he thought he had killed her.

"You frightened me," she said. "You press so hard. No, no, I don't mean frightened. But I didn't understand..."

His arms were round her neck. He drew her to him and held her, crushing her until she bit her lips.

Abruptly he released her, almost pushing her away.

"I want you to go now," he said.

"No!" she cried; and clung to him.

He loosed her arms. "Yes. You must go."

"But I may come back?"

"Why make it harder?" he said. "I want you to go."

"Away from you altogether? Forever out of your life?"

"Yes," he said.

She was going to speak again, but saw his face was white and strained. She realized that he was fighting with himself.

"Please go," he said.

"I don't understand," she said. "It doesn't seem necessary, or right. Just cruel."

"Please go," he repeated.

"Why have you changed?" she cried. "You were so different at first, at Daventry."

"I didn't realize then," he said. "I didn't know."

"You have seen something," she said. "You have seen the future—as you foresaw these other things. You have seen the end of all our dreams."

Her eyes were haunted with a vision of darkness.

"Yes," he said. "I have seen something."

"Too terrible to be faced?" she asked.

"Too terrible to be remembered," he said.

She came to him. "Kiss me," she said.

He kissed her.

She turned and went toward the door, slowly. Her head was bent. She fumbled at the knob.

He walked across the room and opened the door. She did not look at him, or at Harrington, waiting in the surgery.

"I will send you home in the car," he said.

She did not thank him; did not speak while they waited for Marple; did not say good night as she was driven away.

XXV

WARD went back into the house, and into his study. He did not notice at first that his grandfather still occupied one of the easy chairs.

"You seem disturbed," the old man said. "Nothing unpleasant, I hope?"

But your face has the peculiar pallor that one would associate with a detected murderer."

"I am a murderer," Ward answered quietly. "I have murdered my children—for their own sakes."

"What do you mean?" the old man asked. "What's the matter? Dear God, is something always happening in this neighborhood?"

"It's bedtime," Ward said. "Where is Philpotts?" He rang the bell.

"It is scarcely decent that one should be sent to bed by one's grandson," Lord Daventry complained. "It is peculiarly indecent that one should be sent to bed without receiving the explanation of a very strange remark. Children? I don't understand."

"Don't worry," Ward said. "They won't bother you. You'll never see them."

Philpotts announced himself with a tap that seemed to follow him.

Lord Daventry glanced at his grandson, shrugged his shoulders and rose.

"Good night," he said. "I would say 'God bless you'—but it sounds sentimental." He looked very old as he went out.

Ward sat down at his desk and worked for an hour, answering letters, making notes in his casebook and checking accounts. It was midnight when he went to bed.

He was tired, but he could not sleep. He tried not to consider his recent action. It was past, finished. Yet he could not dismiss the subject. Had he acted sanely or stupidly?

He reviewed his own life. It seemed that he had done badly. At least, he had not drifted. The very neighborhood in which he lived was a witness to will power, to stability of purpose.

Had he misunderstood his own character; magnified the normal into the abnormal? Was he in reality different from other men?

Looking through himself, he watched the beast within—the thing he had fought with, the thing that he was.

He heard a dog barking somewhere in the direction of Newchurch. Then came faint sounds from the Chayle colliery.

His mind began to drift. He saw a great wheel, like the wheel at the colliery. He watched it grow until it dominated the sky—a black rainbow in a night of stars. It began to revolve—the lower half lost in the earth shadows. Bound on the wheel were forms of men and women. He saw them carried to the stars, and then down to the dust.

It seemed to him that he saw endless revolutions, watched innumerable lives.

The barking of the dog recalled him to wakefulness. The wheel of destiny disappeared.

He thought of his own strange experience. However others might try to explain them, he knew that he himself could not account for them on what would be considered normal grounds. The conviction of a knowledge beyond temporal knowledge established itself impregnably.

Whatever else these premonitions and previsions might mean, they proved at least, to him, that the control of life was not based on a vague, impersonal development. Humanity had importance, and was regulated by a power which, however suprahuman, could be known in degree, and comprehended in degree, by men. The whole scheme of existence was not fortuitous. Every detail had value. Conduct was not an affair of individual preference. It was concerned with the final end.

The face of the woman he desired came to him, objectively. He looked into the eyes.

She was decadent, as he was decadent. Their blood was tainted.

He seemed to look back through an endless cycle of centuries; yet always he was looking into the eyes of this woman, eyes which became magnified grotesquely, until they streamed like meteors through a firmament of time. He struggled to escape from them, and, as he struggled, saw himself through all the ages, fighting, but not winning. God! At whatever cost, he must break that endless chain of years, and hide those eyes in the darkness.

Quivering, he came back to half-consciousness. He tried—to remember

something that he had forgotten. It eluded him. He strained to grasp it.

Darkness. He saw himself, as he had seen himself before. He was asleep. He dreamed that she was at his side—this woman whom he had known from the beginning of time. She had leaned very close to him; had whispered to him of a new life stirring within her. And he had drawn her close, and kissed her. And in his dream he had walked to and fro, watching the beast within him; the beast that snarled and grinned. He had tried to throttle it, but it had leaped away from him, mocking him. He thought of the new life that was coming; saw a little form, relaxed, with tiny closed fingers. "This is my son," he thought, his heart stirring. He looked intently, and saw that the beast, whose name was legion, had already occupied that frail tenement, and grinned at him, baring its teeth. His face became rigid. There must be no new life, no little form with the taint of devils. He stretched out his hands, and caught the beast, choking it. It tore him, but he tightened his grip. And it seemed that he woke from his dream; and by his side was a dead woman, with the marks of strangling fingers on her throat. . . .

It was some time before he could throw off the weight of that nightmare. Was it warning, or prophecy, or merely the invention of a brooding mind? And yet once before it had come to him, in that night of strange dreams at Daventry. And he had learned beyond all doubting since then that these provisions always found exact fulfillment.

And yet—how could the future be fixed? If he himself had power to choose now, how could he lose the power to choose again, if need were? How could fate be inexorable, unchangeable? His grandfather was right.

Probabilities only could be foreseen, not inevitabilities. Nothing was inevitable.

No; rather, everything was inevitable. When the first step had been taken, the last was assured. Slowly, a message symbolled itself, as with vast letters on a pyramid. Right or wrong, man must live up to the best that was in him. He must justify his vision of life, so far as he could see it; and make—not accept—destiny.

He knew what was involved in living alone: the incompleteness, the semi-sterilization of effort; the unfilled days, the vacant nights. Well, he would have his work. He could help things forward a little. The rest was his own affair.

And she?

She must grapple with her own problem. Man had taken much from woman, for his lust and his desire and his love. But he had given more: pretending when illusion was gone; yielding to her weakness, as to a child's; deceiving her, for her vanity's sake; killing his soul, that her body might live.

A new day had dawned. Woman was learning to stand side by side with man. She had always known how to suffer. She must learn to suffer in new ways.

Yet, half consciously, he stretched out his arms. . . .

He was utterly tired. A weight was on his eyes. As he drifted into sleep, he seemed to hear thinly, from a distance, the blare of a steam siren, calling laborers to their toil in the early morning. Dreamily, he felt his kinship with those who do things, walking steadfastly in a known path, and fulfilling a purpose, whether in the making of pots or the hewing of coal. These were but symbols of the supreme necessity—achievement.



WOMEN claim never to have lost, but merely to have mislaid, their virtue.

FROM THE MEMOIRS OF A PROMINENT CITIZEN

A Page from the Book of Broadway

By George Bronson-Howard

THEY hanged poor Brownie the other day. Out in one of those semi-barbarous Southwestern States, they "hanged him by the neck until he was dead." And here I am, prosperous, respected, even honored, and a representative "of the people" (as "the peepul" love to believe) in Congress. But if Kincaid had met him instead of me that night before Brownie and I were about to commit our biggest offense against the law, might not Buck Tremmersett have danced on nothing down there in the Southwestern desert and the Honorable Arthur Paget Browne deliberated gravely on lower tariffs and bigger navies? I am no hypocrite in private, no matter what my career compels me to be in public, and what little there was to choose between Brownie and myself was all on his side, not mine. Poor old Brownie! I suppose he had to pay for scores of ancestors who lolled on plantation porticoes while hundreds of slaves sweated to bring in money to be danced and diced away. There must be some good reason why *he* had to suffer and I did not, and my people can show a clean bill of health: they worked too hard and got too little pay to have the time, strength or money to show anything else. So it was about time for a Tremmersett to come in for the good things of the earth; whereas the Paget-Brownes had them for a hundred years or more, until, with Browne's grandfather, the family fortunes started to landslide.

You know those F. F. V.'s of nowadays, don't you?—most of them not to be

distinguished with the naked eye from plain ordinary citizens. It's only when the Hunt Balls come off, and you see dancing with the débutantes the fellow who served your ice cream soda, or who sold you your socks, or who traded in newlaid eggs for a ham, that you realize, without any awe, that you have a speaking acquaintance with those famous first families of song and story. And should you ask one of them who resides in the red brick Tudor mansion that dominates the town from the heights nearby, the handsomest house roundabout, you are apt to hear that "nobody" resides there. At least nobody *much*: only those Ketchams who have the brewery that employs half the population of the town. But old man Ketcham kept a saloon and, although even he would not have insulted his white patrons by allowing negroes at the bar, it was an open scandal that, if they handed in buckets at the side door, they would not be returned empty.

Whereas, did you inadvertently refer to an unshaven, unsightly creature, reeking of rum, as "that old drunk," the one who had so scornfully put in their negligible place the upstart Ketchams would grow stern of mien and request that you refer more respectfully to "one of the Randolphs—the Randolphs, sir." And "Brownie" was one of the Brownes—"the *Paget-Brownes*, sir."

I first saw Brownie—I was far too unimportant a person to meet him socially those days—at a county horse show, which I had been sent to report for a Richmond paper. "Brownie"

rode his dappled mare in the steeplechase that followed, made a good showing, and, with other contestants of good families, drank wassail at the Warrenton House. At the ball that night, twoscore negroes, servants of Brownie and his friends, stood outside under the chestnut trees, in charge of the horses and rigs, and, even more important, of divers flasks. Between dances, their masters left the ballroom and, each calling for his "boy," the flasks were requisitioned until they were empty; as a result, much irresolution of walk and talk, much colliding of dancing couples, much stumbling, one or two falls, a deal of boisterous laughter. The women did not seem to take it very seriously: it was the privilege of Paget-Brownes or Randolphs, it seemed.

I often wondered why Browne ever left a town where, by virtue of his ancestry and despite his own lack of enterprise and position, he held so high a place. "No door was shut to him," as their saying is; he attended the most exclusive affairs, was greeted respectfully by "white trash" and negroes, was tended solicitously when drunk and carried home tenderly. He might have entered politics, and his popularity would have carried him almost as far as my brains and work have since carried me. He might have married one of many girls of his own class, many of whom had more money than he. Between the interest on such a wife's money and that which could be gained from the remaining acres of the original Paget-Browne patent, Brownie's income would have been ample for all the necessities and for some luxuries. And all this without any labor to speak of, for most of the farming down there was done by "white trash" and negroes on the sharing principle. Or he might have married among the newly-rich anxious for a position in county society: one of the Ketcham girls was "crazy about him" (as she would have said), and there were others besides the Ketchams. But I suppose the monotony of the social system bored him. So, when he inherited his acres, he sold them and came to New York.

II

I DID not know him in his early New York days. I gather from his subsequent conversation that he had confidence in his knowledge of horseflesh. The tracks were in their heyday then: Morris Park, Gravesend and Sheepshead; and nearby, Saratoga, Pimlico, Bennings. In the intervals between "meets" he attended prizefights and took financial interests therein, and called by their nicknames wheelmen, faro-dealers and the proprietors of poker parlors—privileges for which one must pay highly.

Often I have wondered at the imaginations that can conceive of profitable gambling for outsiders. In Monte Carlo one sees a block of marble palaces built from proprietary profits, most expensive paintings and statuary within, a horde of well dressed employees; knows that after the Prince of Monaco has received millions a year for his rental, and the entire taxes of the country have also been paid, the profits are still enormous. At Ascot or Epsom, in Tattersall's private enclosure, one sees the same prosperous, paunched bookmakers year after year, and in London at "the Roman's" their wives or sweethearts blazing with jewelry. On Broadway, at Curate's or Sydenham's the wives or sweethearts of New York gambling house proprietors, arrayed like Solomon's lilies, may be observed drinking the costliest wines. . . . And these are honest proprietors; yet the outsider must also take his chances against more than occasional "brace" games: electrically connected "wheels," "high layouts," "strippers" and factory-marked cards, "signaling," "cold decks" and many and various private dexterities of professional card men. In the face of all this, gambling by outsiders seems nothing less than a disease.

I imagine Brownie, unawares, encountered all the brace games. Though he had many splendid strokes of race-track luck, he was penniless in less than two years. When I next saw him, it was at the Belvedere, where we both lived, a cheap lodging house called a

hotel because it had a lobby and a clerk at the desk: one of those innumerable side street Tenderloin places from which the poor go forth to prey on the rich. Here, for want of funds, we sat in the lobby; for want of something to do, we formulated all sorts of petty larceny schemes. Somehow, we managed to keep alive: in my case, chiefly because of my idea about the duplicate lunch room checks.

It was this that brought Brownie and me together. Up to then I had not remarked him save as the one of us sunk in the deepest gloom, for the racing season was over. While the tracks had been open, even if he failed to net anything by the sale of his tips, always there was some lucky winner who knew him when he had been a "gentleman," and would "stake" him to a "finnif," as he would have expressed it then. Talk about "blood tells"!—here was the descendant of all the Paget-Brownes, accepting charity from ex-stable boys, jockeys, coarse, ungrammatical race-track followers. And his speech was composed entirely of what such people call "wise cracks"—the patter of the underworld. So much so that he was afterward dubbed "The Wise Cracking Kid."

"We see a lot of that sort," an experienced lawbreaker told me afterward, one day in London, when the conversation happened to drift to old days at the Belvedere. He was a courtly-mannered old gentleman with silvered hair, a monocle and a precise, melodious speech. "I don't just know the reason for the germ. I suppose the explanation lies along the same psychological lines as that of the kids who play at Robin Hood and Dick Turpin—and later in life tell girls how wicked they are: drunk every night—wild fellows. It's effective with some girls, too. . . . Anyhow, the underworld is full of boys who never stole a dollar: who haven't the nerve. They sponge on people who have, run their errands—*lobbygows*. Some even get money from home. What they love best is to find people a little more ignorant or inexperienced than themselves—girls especially—and

tell them how they broke into banks or held up trains or did some desperate deed somewhere. . . . I knew one once who would buy a billfold, dirty it up a bit, put a few dollars into it and come rushing into a hangout telling us how he 'nicked a boob for this poke on a crosstown short with a big harness bull right at my mitt!' He never used ordinary English if there was a 'wise crack' equivalent; and he pulled that billfold stunt half a dozen times until we began to wonder why they were all alike, outside and in—"

III

BROWNIE wasn't that bad, of course; but I know he was guiltless of any illegal offense before we met. But, to hear him, although he was never specific about time or place or the character of his crimes, you might have imagined he was Black Bart; and, though I have known many thieves, never one has spoken so fluently the *argot* of the underworld. For this he commanded the admiration of most of the Belvedere residents: a stupid lot, generally. I suppose none of them had ever dared lay hands on anything of greater value than the *petit* larceny law covered. Mostly, they had drifted into the lower world through sheer inability to secure high enough wages to be other than half starved; and they welcomed Browne's tales as the realization of their own ambitions. As for Brownie, having been shamefully despoiled of his inheritance by sharper men, I suppose it was some innate power of self-deception that he used to preserve his self-respect. He was loudest in his derision of "easy marks," perhaps for fear these Belvedere folk would discover he had been one.

Personally, the calling of crook never appealed to me. Always I have believed that, in this world of fools, a man is deficient who cannot keep within legal limits and flourish. I *had* flourished in my native town, had been a city editor at nineteen; but two years of it convinced my immature brain that the town was too small for my large talents—

this very town which I now represent in Congress, pitiful little ass that I was! It is a common fever, and it crowds New York: the small town is the place for big returns nowadays; in New York most people are squelched by subordination if they find jobs, or fall into crooked ways if they don't. I had been unable to secure anything that offered even a living wage—according to my ideas of living—and while remaining unattached that I might be ready when something worthy of me should turn up—as I imagined importantly it was bound to do—I came down to my last five dollars.

It was then that I conceived the plan of the duplicate lunch room checks, and turned to view the lobby loungers for the best partner—it needed another man. Brownie was nearest, and I beckoned him out for a walk, during which I outlined my plan to get food and drink for nothing—almost. Brownie was enthusiastic. Since the tracks had closed down he had not eaten with any degree of regularity.

My system was simple, and may still be utilized by any two hungry ones. I give it here for their benefit. In the cheaper restaurants or lunch rooms the waitress punches on a check the amount of one's meal—which is payable to the sharp-eyed cashier at the only exit. I entered one of these restaurants, and passing far to the rear ordered a glass of milk which I drank so slowly and over which I dawdled so long that it was ten minutes before I called for my check. The waitress insisted that she had given it to me at the moment of serving: I was equally insistent in the negative, although to please her I searched every pocket, looked under the table and elsewhere. Finally she accompanied me to the cashier, explaining that the check was lacking; and I was allowed to ransom myself without it. After a similar experience in a place just over the way, Brownie joined me around the corner, and we exchanged checks and restaurants. Passing into his, I took another retired position; and ordered a hungry man's meal, denying myself nothing; the check for which I buried deep in an inside pocket. Then, waiting until

a number of people should be in line at the cashier's cage, I joined them, paid Brownie's check for his single cup of coffee and joined him again, this time bright of eye and of speech, the recipient of a meal whose like had not cheered him in a decennium—or so it had seemed to him; and this plan of procuring our daily bread we continued as far north as Fifty-eighth Street and as far south as Madison Square for the better part of two weeks; when the threat of the clerk at the Belvedere made me turn to the consideration of schemes that would produce roomrent. Resulted the idea of the Bibles: as simple basically and structurally as the other.

It came from glancing idly and aimlessly through a newspaper, the favorite of middle class respectability, a copy of which had been abandoned in an "L" train on which I was returning from my 'steen-hundredth rejection by Park Row. When one wishes to avoid intimate and unpleasant reflections, any sort of reading matter serves; and, as there was about to be confided to me the bitter conviction that I was an incompetent ass, I pretended interest even in advertising, diverting my contempt to those fools for whom certain palpable swindles were set forth at great expense. "What sort of people *invest* in such things?" I asked myself, and was answered by the obituary column where, in agate type, at no inconsiderable number of pennies per line, was inserted atrocious doggerel "In Memoriam." One particularly—I, an intelligent man, without funds and money wasted on such ghastly, grisly nonsense—shook me with silent scorn:

My Dear Husband's gone to Heaven,
On an Angel's Wing,
Up There on the Streets so Golden,
Praises he will sing.

BY HIS LOVING WIFE.

. . . "Mrs. Jerry K. Winch"—the address a Harlem one. As I mused over her superlative idiocy, the personal side of it occurred to me. The money of such folk must be easy to get; why shouldn't I have some of it? In another minute I saw a way. So I left the train at Astor Place instead of Herald Square.

At the office of the American Bible Society I bought two very respectable imitations of leather-bound Bibles. Around the corner, where the clerk directed me, I ordered gold stamping for each, Gutenberg type, Gothic, impressive but inexpensive: "Jerry K. Winch" for one, "Ephraim Cowley" for the other! Ephraim had been in the same column. But after I had sent Brownie for them later in the day, he showed his usual lack of constructive imagination, and I was forced to explain.

"We call, asking for Mr. Winch. After sad news, surprise—sympathy—condolences—'We won't intrude business at such a time'—prepare to go. 'Any friend of my own dear husband's'—we yield to her persuasions: unwrap Bible—there's his name in bright gold letters—his last message. 'A few weeks ago Mr. Winch ordered a Bible from us. . . .' The rest is pure logic. If she loved him enough to break into print at fifty cents a line, what will she do when she thinks poor dear Jerry was so thoughtful of his soul that he ordered another Bible? It makes his salvation sure. She'll gladly pay four dollars for that. The cost, including stamping and carfare, is a dollar and thirty-five cents. Figure three or four a day. Gives me plenty of time to keep hunting my job and you to dope out those 'past performance' tables."

"It seems a dirty trick," said that ridiculous Brownie. "However—" he hastened to add.

He resurrected his frockcoat from the pawnshop after I had made the Winch sale, and wore with it a white lawn tie—as I did; and, with our none too recent top hats, we looked like earnest young divinity students. We made only one slip—where the husband had been bedridden for nearly a year before his death; but even then I convinced his widow he had ordered through a friend. Such people, as their poetic efforts show, will stand for anything. I cannot see, to this day, what harm we did. We made them happy with the thought that the minds of the departed ones had been on spiritual things. And we encouraged

Biblical study. However, that young sentimentalist, Brownie, had to spoil it all.

It was after a month of profitable sales that I found him seated, half drunk, in the hotel bar, gloomy and depressed. He wept into his whiskey when he told me why; and I, too, became sufficiently sentimental after several drinks to share his melancholy and self-hate and to swear off peddling Bibles.

Mrs. Michael Hartigan had done it. She drew ten dollars a week in a department store and paid out three to a woman who minded her baby. The husband had died an atheist. Not the least of her sorrows had been the thought that a particularly hot spike in hell had been dusted off on his arrival. The ordering of the Bible proved, instead, that he was wearing the glorified nightgown uniform of a member of the Heavenly Host. She had fainted for joy, clutching Michael's passport to the better world; and when the contrite Brownie had revived her, she begged him to let her keep it on the installment plan: she had only a dollar in cash. Brownie, who had taken the Bible from her while she was unconscious, now slipped in ten dollars between the pages, and, incoherent, departed.

"What a filthy business!" he said fiercely. "I'm done. I'm through. I'd rather starve." Somehow, he managed to convince me that I would, too. I'm the most moral man in the world when I have a few dollars in the bank.

IV

It was soon after this that we met Gracie Graham. Brownie fell in love with her and she with me. Brownie was too tame for her: he would fetch and carry and pay her compliments, just like the men on whom she preyed. But I gave her to understand on several occasions that, when I associated with a semi-educated young woman of no great mental endowments, I condescended. True she was pretty enough; and like all New York women who have the price, she wore smart clothes; and,

for the reason that New York contains more ignorant men with money than any city in the world, she could pick and choose among half a dozen daily as to which was to have the honor of paying for her dinner and taxicabs: with a sad story at the end of it when the man asked her to see him the next night: a story about the horrid old man who had promised her a cheque if she would dine with him then; and, much as she hated it, if she didn't she would lose all the money she had paid on her diamond ring and the installment house would take the ring back. That was one story: she had half a dozen just as effective. When the rescuer wanted *his* payment, she was out. New York is full of Gracie Gramams.

Of course, she didn't try any such tricks on us, for, although our new hotel was better than the Belvedere, it was not the sort that sheltered wealth. Besides, all human beings love *confidantes*. You lose half the pleasure of making one person look foolish if you cannot tell another one; who, living the same sort of life as yours, cannot condemn and will likely applaud. As Anson Eagle, who lived as we did in those days, wrote in his "Baldads of Broadway":

For a life like this, it lonely is,
With never a steady pal,
To be at the joint when you come to tell
How you grabbed a live one and how he fell
For the "old thing" game or the upturned shell:
So the boy he got him a gal.

Brownie, true to his belief of the way to win a woman, had told Gracie all sorts of fantastic lies about our exploits as *chevaliers d'industrie* and our narrow escapes from the hands of the law; which I was forced to confirm when called upon. Brownie had confided his love to me the first day we met Gracie, and I would not be a stumbling block. In return, when I was present, Gracie told some lies of her own: founded on truth, doubtless, but three-quarters fiction *in toto*; and Brownie set himself the task of advising her to greater profit. He was always talking about "not going color-blind looking at silver—get the big money"; and all the while the savings from our Bible scheme were running low; and they ran lower

when Gracie borrowed most of Brownie's and he had to borrow from me.

"Well," he protested sulkily when I chided him—"well, you know how things are in the summer. None of the good men are in town, and the few that are she don't meet because she isn't working." Gracie had always had a roof garden engagement previous summers. "But there's a man coming from Chicago next week, worth barrels and crazy about her. Don't bother about anything you loan her—"

We heard much of this man subsequently from Gracie. He had written her several times most respectfully; and, from his orthography and calligraphy, seemed the sort to be sentimental and liberal; but he continued to delay his arrival until, when finally he did come, my savings had vanished. So, between us and eviction, we had only what Gracie owed Brownie, and we were back at our lunch room tricks for meals.

Judge our horror then when, on the night that the Chicago man came, Gracie ran swiftly into our room without knocking, telling us in guarded whispers that our Chicago rescue party was in her sitting room; that he was vilely intoxicated; that he had insulted her grossly, and that she had been compelled to flee to us for protection!

Brownie started up, swearing; but she pulled him back. "And just think," she wailed: "he must have thousands in his pocket—a big fat roll *so* thick. . . . He showed it to me. If I could only have snatched it and run!" Her eyes sought mine. "The beast! Can't somebody *do* something to him? Is he to have all that and we starve?" Still her eyes inquired of mine, mutely. "If we only knew someone who'd just knock him down and *take* it!"

"Why!" said Brownie valiantly. "Why—" But she looked at me. I think she realized that Brownie would make excuses: would explain how, if it wasn't for fear of having her *name* involved—if it wasn't that everybody knew we were her intimates—if it wasn't for—any number of good reasons, he, Arthur Paget-Browne, would—do any number of desperate things. Women rea-

son better than men realize; but, because they reason with their subconscious brain and are unable to give categories and syllogisms with their results, men refer to their "intuition" as though it were a form of hysteria.

It was then I realized Brownie hadn't a show if I cared to go after this girl; and such is the natural egotism of men that my sole purpose at the moment was to prove her confidence in me was deserved. I had a flash of futurities, allied with her. I had been on the wrong track: my talents, doubtless, lay along the lines of larceny; for the first time, I recalled the lunch room and Bible grafts with some pride. This girl had divined those talents. Together we would go down in the history of law-breaking as the most remarkable of all criminal couples. And the prospect actually stirred me and set my heart to beating high.

But my head was clear: I saw her little game. "Go on back to him now," I said coolly. "Even if he is blind drunk, he may suspect. You needn't have told that yarn about his insults and his attacks. We all need the money too badly to need excuses for our consciences—" She interrupted me with an indignant exclamation, and with what a certain type of writer calls "flashing eyes." "Now, now," I urged, smiling, "remember you're among friends and you can tell your real name. You saw the roll, saw he was drunk and wondered how you could get it. Then you thought if you could stir us up with a tale of bitter wrong, we would think it was morally right to take it. Well, maybe it is; maybe he stole it. Maybe it's wrong; maybe he didn't. But we'll grab it, anyhow. . . . So you get back to him. When you send him away tell him not to take a cab, —say some nighthawk is apt to drive him to some lonely place and brain him. He mustn't take a cab. That would be the blow-off."

"But I thought—" she began.

"You thought we could do it *here*?" I asked scornfully. "We couldn't spend enough tonight to pay for seven years up the river. Run along now."

If Brownie had not been there, she

would have thrown her arms around me. As it was, she used her eyes.

"Be careful," she said—"oh, do be careful. I'd never forgive myself. . . ." Poor Brownie was too occupied with dismal forebodings to notice that none of her solicitude was for him. Outside the hotel, he "wondered if it was wise" and was informed that his services were not necessary. "Go back and tell her I'll bring the roll," I jeered. That decided him. Although, even then, he did none of the actual work. It was I who struck the fellow down.

It was no great feat of either power or cunning. To reach Broadway, he must pass through a sort of Valley of the Shadows—a row of gambling houses, their fronts shuttered, silent and unlighted: between any two pairs of high brownstone steps broad patches of sheer dusky gloom. As he passed, Brownie, lounging as directed, asked him for a match, moving into the shadow patch as he did so; for otherwise possible sharp eyes at either end of the block might see the fall. This way, it appeared to any such that he had stepped in toward a gratinged basement entrance, and had been admitted to a gambling house—a very credible thing for a drunken man to do.

The high steps on either side hid any further operations, and when he had fallen under a well directed blow from my heavy-knotted cocobolo walking stick, we had only passers-by, or persons emerging from the basement to fear while we—or rather I—poor shivering Brownie would not touch him—collected the spoils.

I felt his heart—I'll say that much for myself; and I left his watch, stickpin, cigarette case and all other articles of value except the roll. People came and went every little while from the gambling house, and he would soon be discovered and sent on his way—so I assured Brownie, but he needed four strong slugs of whiskey before he could believe this, or anything else. It was not until after we had counted the money and found it was considerably more than two thousand that Brownie began to feel that what we had done was right.

And, when we returned to Gracie, he felt that it had been not only right but noble. To hear him tell it was like reading a newspaper account: all wrong but very romantic. He added details of his own mental processes the existence of which had not been revealed at the time by his pale, scared face. It appeared he had not been scared at all: he was too busy plotting craftily and bloodthirstily what he would do should passers-by or police intervene; and he had been crouched like a panther waiting to deal a decisive blow should mine prove ineffective. As I listened to him, it seemed the efficiency of my action was merely accidental: Brownie had conceded me the initiative out of pure unselfishness.

Nevertheless, his enthusiasm for our new profession, now that the plunge was over, infected me; and Gracie's ardent gaze helped me to a like enthusiasm. Abandoned were all ambitions to become a Greeley, a Dana or a Brisbane. I spoke contemptuously of all dull plodding drones willing to accept honest drudgery. Eight hundred apiece for the work of a few moments!

Within the next few days, after waiting for our victim to recover and return to Chicago—a journey on Gracie's part would have been a confession of guilt before that—we three sailed for Southampton; Gracie and I as Mr. and Mrs. James Buchanan Stone; Brownie trailing along, partly consoled for his disappointment of the heart by smart new clothes and roseate promises the future held forth.

V

I do not remember seeing in print at any time anything that adequately describes the life for which we had now definitely declared ourselves. Either one reads of low, besotted criminals such as were first made familiar to the public by Hogarth and by "Oliver Twist," or else they are romantic fellows who never lived outside fiction: descendants of Harrison Ainsworth's heroes, "Lupins," "Raffles," "Wallingfords"—whose authors know of the underworld only by hearsay. The real people have no distin-

guishing characteristics, save that, as a rule, their profession demands they be better groomed than the average citizen and spend money more freely. They are to be found in every first class café, and in half of the clubs, of any cosmopolitan city. Many have titles—some real, some not; most are excellently educated and entertaining of discourse; a goodish half are ex-professional men. Waiters—even head waiters—welcome them: they tip better than most and are on speaking terms with a large proportion of the aristocracy of spenders. They are assisted by many friends and familiars who share their spoils—actors, actresses and theatrical managers, many of whom have graduated from their ranks; criminal lawyers, *demi-mondaines* and men-about-town. Their little world is most exclusive, close knit by general suspicion of outsiders, hence a world difficult to enter unless one is already implicated in some offense against the law. Although its members are everywhere: one may be your bridge partner at a house party of the newly rich, your dancing partner at an upper class Bohemian gathering, may be seen nightly at your favorite restaurant, give a box party at the opening night of a new play. . . .

We were first welcomed into this world on board our Atlantic greyhound. It is astonishing how many desirable acquaintances one can make when a good-looking girl is of your party. And if her male escorts dress for dinner and carry their dress clothes as though they were accustomed to their nightly use, even the suspicious are at your heels.

So I found, and so did Brownie. In the smoking room and lounge, superior-looking men were at some trouble to make our acquaintance, continuing in our company, by hook or crook, until Gracie loomed up; practically forcing introductions. And I never made it easy for them, on the principle that not until you hang out the S. R. O. sign can you persuade people to be eager to enter your theater. Thus we came to know a newly created Canadian peer, the son of a Middle West petroleum king, a vapid New Yorker or two, members of the best clubs—some half a dozen more, rich and in-

ane. So devoted were they that if she wished to be alone Gracie had to keep to her cabin.

On the fourth day I got my passport into Subterranea. A man with a small mustache and a pleasant smile lay in wait for Gracie outside our stateroom, and asked me to excuse him for a moment while he spoke to my "wife." "I'm a friend of Evelyn VanBuren," he told her. A few minutes later she brought him into the stateroom. Both were smiling. "He thought maybe you were a—an outsider, Buck," she said. "This"—she lowered her voice—"is Bob Stanley, but he's on the passenger list as H. St. John Edgar. He'll split it fifty fifty if I introduce him to Lord Hagworth and Mr. Todd"—the peer and the petroleum heir—"and I was telling him some of the others were worth while, too."

"All Gracie has to do is organize a bridge party," said Bob Stanley. "Tomorrow after luncheon is best. I can meet them tonight. I'll drift up to the lounge while you're taking coffee. You play, Buck?" So was I admitted: there are no "Misters" and "Misses" in Subterranea. . . . We reached London a hundred and fifty pounds richer.

But that was only the beginning. Brownie and I were initiated into the mysteries of "strippers" and "signals," Gracie acting always as the decoy: some cleverer card manipulator always willing to help us scientifically to pluck our pigeon. Working without her, we learned how to operate "the match," "the lemon" and various other simple but profitable games. We "declared in" other friends and were rewarded by reciprocity. Other games, too, matters of personality and persuasiveness rather than technicality. Altogether, for more than six months, we frequented the most expensive restaurants of London, Paris and Monte Carlo; were frequenters of Epsom, Ascot, Auteuil and other racetracks: in fact, were always to be found when wealth and fashion gathered publicly and always seemed the peers of the wealthiest and the most fashionable. Not once did we have even a warning from the police.

But, with the Leopold Wyndam af-

fair, the blow fell. However, I was not there to meet it: I was on my way back to America. It had not taken long for the novelty of the life to wear off; and now, far from seeing myself the master of my pigeons, I saw I was really quite as much their servants as any hired women. I could not consult my own personal tastes at all. My day began with five o'clock tea, and ended, in London, when they turned the last people out of the Cosmo supper club; in Paris, with breakfast at the Pré Catelan, the early morning sun shining on my rumpled dress clothes. I must conceal all my real emotions, pretend to be amused by the conversation of bores if they had money, uproariously insist on buying wine for rich drunkards, as though buying wine was my favorite indoor sport, laugh heartily at degenerate stories that should have been warrant enough for knocking their narrators down. Say what you will against the sons of Subterranea, at least they live the life as a profession, and are vastly superior to those who live it for pleasure. Pleasure—God save the mark. What worthless sewer-minded beasts those rich pleasure seekers are: a hundred times more criminal than we, were the world ruled by justice instead of by law.

Never once did I feel any compunctions at taking their money—never one single time. When I think how many people had to live like dogs that these worms could spend fortunes on indecency, I really believe I was doing a worthy thing. Worms, graveyard worms, fat and sluggish and noisome, that's what they were. To be forced to endure their companionship was worth incalculable sums: it was they who drove me back to honesty, not my fellow adventurers.

It was just about the time that the worms' companionship had begun to get intolerable that I met old Tom Kincaid, mayor of my home town for over a decade, and Miss Mary, at Hyères, where I had gone with Brownie for a few days' vacation, that stretched into a week after meeting them. They were from my home town; I had been a reporter on old Tom's paper. It does one good to meet rich men like him: the thought of taking

his money occurred to us no more than would heaving a brick through a cathedral window. There was no touch of the sanctimonious moralist about him; yet he had done more to make my birthplace clean than ten thousand vice crusaders; for, both as mayor and newspaper editor, he admitted the fundamental instincts of men and urged that it was better they should be safeguarded only against excess than to deny them everything and have unrestricted secret horrors. He had some new plans for civic legislation, had come abroad to study their working in France and Germany, and was all aglow with the realization of their practicality; talking gleefully of how he would carry them through alike in the teeth of ignorant prudes and political grafters.

"The crux of the difficulty in America, suh," he said sadly, "is that grafters don't want vice restricted and made to pay taxes to relieve the po'ah people. They want the taxes paid to *them*. And they work up hysterical refo'mahs to make ridiculous laws of suppression. The refo'mahs are the cats that pull the chestnuts out of the fi'ah, suh. I have to fight them bo'ath."

Disguising my inside knowledge of vice by calling myself a criminologist, I gave him much helpful and illuminating advice. He was manifestly sorry to see me go; but Gracie's insistent telegrams from Paris were not to be overlooked any longer: she might join us. On the train back, Brownie was also melancholy and depressed but for a different reason.

"What a girl!" he said. He had been allowed to escort Miss Mary about while her father and I talked sociology and reform. "It makes a man realize how low he is to meet a girl like that. Why, I'm not fit to touch the hem of her skirt!" (Oh, yes! Brownie was one of those sentimentalists who talked that way.) "I'm not fit to be on the same street with her. My God, Buck," he burst out, tears in his eyes, "why couldn't I have married a girl like that in Warrenton? But it's too late now, too late—"

"Why?" I reasoned, sensibly. "You have never been arrested, much less convicted. You have some money—enough to last you a year if you're careful. Why

don't you go back on the same boat with them—settle in Richmond? Why, with your name—in Virginia! Old Tom'll find some way to make you useful and help support your wife." Unconsciously, save for the wife part of it, I was outlining my own desires; convincing myself of their feasibility; and it annoyed me for Brownie to shake his head and say it was too late: too many people knew: he was bound to be recognized some day and that meant disgrace for her, too—it wasn't fair. . . . Which shows, from the accepted standpoint of morality—the sentimental one—how superior Brownie was to me; as you will see.

Gracie had called us back to Paris for a grand *coup*: one whose success would enable us to quit the life we were leading and give each one of us a small income for life—to live as we liked. I had planned it all before we left for Hyères, and she was to play her game with the man while we were away. She had done so; but, because of our delay, we must follow him to London to finish it off; and here again I was to blame for what followed: for the laws of England are much severer against this particular sort of blackmail than are the laws of France; where hypocritical respectability does not get a deal of sympathy. And Leopold Wyndam, a South African Jew who had been shrewd enough to make a fortune by trickery on the Rand, had suspected before he fled and was prepared for us; although this I did not know when, the night before the trick was to be turned, I met again, quite by accident, old Tom Kincaid and Miss Mary.

I was dining alone at the Carlton because of a bitter quarrel with Gracie, when old Tom came in. He was taking the boat train to Liverpool immediately after dinner, and, to my utter amazement, he blurted out his astonishing proposal a minute after I joined them for coffee. "I've had my hands full as it is, boy," he said; "they'll be full'ah now, with this fight on, and I'm not so strong as I used to be. I doze at my desk nights when I should be getting out the pa'peh. You've grown some, I reckon, since you

were my reportah. You have i-deahs I want my succesah to have. I reckon I've got to die *some* time—"

"Oh, father!" interrupted Miss Mary, with sudden tears. "And so," he went on cheerfully, "since you know the town and it knows you and you have those big i-deahs, I want you to help me be a bet-tah mayah by taking the *Argus* off my hands. Editing it," he added explanatorily; then wistfully: "I tried to get in touch with you in Paris and then here: my agent's still hunting you. I wanted you to take the trip back with us, so by the time you landed you'd be ready to begin. But, of course, now—"

I thought of the bitter quarrel with Gracie—her infernal causeless jealousy again; thought of the Wyndam case next day and the possibility of failure which meant night after night of boredom among drunkards and fools again, with always the possibility of a slip and the legal penalty.

"An hour yet to catch the boat train?" I asked. "Pshaw, Mr. Mayor, I'll pack a few things and meet you at the station."

VI

PEOPLE with good memories for what they read in the newspapers will remember the celebrated Wyndam blackmail. Brownie got three years for it. Gracie was acquitted because Brownie, who without realizing the consequences must have enjoyed playing the desperado before all London, took the entire blame.

My disappearance, the fact that I never returned to the hotel after my quarrel with Gracie (I bought some ready made

things for traveling instead) no doubt inclined both of them to the view of suicide, especially as I had been gloomy ever since Hyères: on all of which I had counted. So, if only for sentimental reasons, my name was not mentioned. Yet it was all my idea, my details—all mine. Poor Brownie, who paid the penalty, had done no more than in the case of the Bibles or the man from Chicago.

. . . I can realize what happened after his three years' "stretch." He was the sort environment shapes. He could not seek out his old haunts and hold up his head an equal again: he was just a Dartmoor convict, one of many. Drinking, then, to forget, and, when hungry, clumsy crimes, the assistant of such bungling lower class crooks as he had come to know in prison. . . It was just such an affair down there in the Southwest: yeggmen, a village post office safe, and a chance shot that reached a pursuer. The others had been more fleet of foot than poor drunken Brownie.

This "justice"! A child psychologist could have told that politically appointed ignoramus of a judge, those heavy-headed, low-browed, half-witted jurymen, that poor Brownie could never shoot anybody. Moreover, there was no weapon found, on or near him. "Justice"!!! And I, who taught him to be what he was, am respected, honored and deferred to, the husband of that Miss Mary whom poor Brownie was much too honorable to have married even if she had been willing, the heir and successor of "the best mayor the town ever had," a power for good in my community, an enemy of graft and corruption. But they hanged poor Brownie.



SOME WORSTS—A honeymoon on a steamer; clodttop shoes; straw suitcases; ship's concerts; white stockings; kid curlers; husbands.

KISSES IN THE TRAIN

By D. H. Lawrence

I SAW the midlands
Revolve through her hair;
The fields of autumn
Stretching bare,
And sheep on the pasture
Tossed back in a scare.

And still as ever
The world went round,
My mouth on her pulsing
Neck was found,
And my breast to her beating
Breast was bound.

But my heart at the center
Of all, in a swoond,
Was still as a pivot,
As all the ground
On its prowling orbit
Shifted round.

And still in my nostrils
The scent of her flesh,
And still my wet mouth
Sought her afresh;
And still one pulse
Through the world did thresh.

And the world all whirling
Around in joy
Like the dance of a dervish
Did destroy
My sense—and my reason
Spun like a toy.

But firm at the center
My heart was found;
Her own to my perfect
Heartbeat bound,
Like a magnet's keeper
Closing the round.

PERTINENT AND IMPERTINENT

By Owen Hatteras

A EUGENIC WEDDING

CHARACTERS

A CLERGYMAN
A BRIDE
FOUR BRIDESMAIDS
THE BRIDE'S FATHER
A BRIDEGROOM
A BEST MAN
THE USUAL CROWD

THE scene is the surgical amphitheater of a hospital, with a tiled floor. The operating table has been pushed to one side, and in place of it there is a small glass-topped bedside table with a roll of aseptic cotton, a basin of bichloride, a pair of clinical thermometers, a bar of green soap, a beaker of two per cent carbolic acid and a microscope. There are no other decorations—no flowers, no white ribbons, no satin cushions. To the left, a door leading into the Anesthetic Room.

The CLERGYMAN is discovered standing behind the table in an expectant attitude. He is in the white jacket and apron of a surgeon, with his head wrapped in white gauze and a gauze respirator over his mouth. He wears rubber gloves of a dirty yellow color, evidently much used. The BRIDEGROOM and BEST MAN have just emerged from the Anesthetic Room and are standing before him. Both are dressed as he is, save that the BRIDEGROOM's rubber gloves are white. The benches running up the amphitheater are filled with men and women in oilskins.

Presently the BRIDE comes in from the Anesthetic Room, accompanied by her FATHER and followed by the four BRIDESMAIDS. She is dressed in white linen, with a long veil of aseptic gauze. The

gauze testifies to its late and careful sterilization by yellowish scorches. There is a white rubber glove upon the BRIDE's right hand, but that belonging to her left hand has been removed. The FATHER is dressed like the BEST MAN. The four BRIDESMAIDS are in the garb of surgical nurses, with their hair completely concealed by bandages of white gauze. There is a faint murmur among the spectators.

CLERGYMAN

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here together in the face of this company to join together this man and this woman in aseptic matrimony, which is commended by Mendel, Ehrlich, Metchnikoff and other eugenists to be honorable among men; and therefore is not to be entered into unadvisedly or carelessly, or without due surgical precautions, but reverently, cleanly, sterilely, soberly and with the nearest practicable approach to chemical purity. Into this holy and non-infectious state these two persons present come now to be joined and quarantined. If any man can show just cause, either clinically or microscopically, why they may not be safely sutured together, let him now come forward with his slides and cultures, or else hereafter forever hold his peace.

(Several spectators shuffle their feet, and an old maid giggles, but no one comes forward.)

CLERGYMAN (to the BRIDE and BRIDEGROOM)

I require and charge both of you, as ye will answer in the dreadful hour of autopsy, when the secrets of all lives shall be disclosed, that if either of you know of any lesion, infection, malaise,

congenital defect, hereditary taint or other impediment, why ye may not be lawfully joined together in eugenic matrimony, ye do now confess it. For be ye well assured that if any persons are joined together otherwise than in a state of absolute chemical and bacteriological innocence, their marriage will be septic, unhygienic, pathogenic and toxic, and eugenically null and void.

(THE BRIDEGROOM hands over a long envelope, from which the CLERGYMAN extracts a paper bearing a large red seal.)

CLERGYMAN (reading)

We, and each of us, having subjected the bearer, John Doe, to a rigid physical and microscopical examination, in accordance with Form B-3 of the American Eugenic Association, do hereby certify that he is free from all disease, taint, defect, deformity and hereditary blemish, and that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, he is perfectly sound in wind and limb. Temperature, 96.6; pulse, 76; respiration, 27.

(Signed) SIGMUND KRAUS, M.D.

JOHN JONES, M.D.

RUDOLPH WASSERMAN, M.D.

Ditto on the psychiatric side, so far as I can see.

HERMAN H. FINK, M.D.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a Justice of the Peace for the Borough of Manhattan, City of New York, State of New York.

[Seal] ABRAHAM LECHOTISKY, J.P.

(The BRIDE thereupon hands up a similar envelope, from which the CLERGYMAN extracts a similar paper.)

CLERGYMAN (reading)

We, and each of us, having subjected the bearer, Mary Roe, to the examination provided for by Form B-4 of the American Eugenic Association, do hereby certify that she is free from all visible disease, taint or blemish, whether hereditary or acquired.

(Signed) MARIE W. MCGINNIS, M.D.

ALICE MARGERY SMITH, M.D.

HENRIETTA HENDERSON, M.D.

I have examined Mary Roe and find her sane.

HERMAN H. FINK, M.D.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a Notary Public of the Borough of Brooklyn, City of New York, State of New York.

[Seal] MATHILDA SWEENEY,
Notary Public.

The CLERGYMAN drops both papers into the bowl of bichloride and proceeds.)

CLERGYMAN (to the BRIDEGROOM)

John, wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live together in the holy state of eugenic matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, protect her from all protozoa and bacteria, and keep her in good health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee unto her only, so long as ye both shall live? If so, hold out your tongue.

(The BRIDEGROOM holds out his tongue and the CLERGYMAN inspects it carefully.)

CLERGYMAN (somewhat dubiously)

Fair. I have seen worse. . . . Do you smoke?

BRIDEGROOM

Not much.

CLERGYMAN

Well, how much?

BRIDEGROOM

Say ten cigarettes a day.

CLERGYMAN

Better taper off to three or four. At all events, make five the limit. How about the booze?

BRIDEGROOM

Never!

CLERGYMAN

What! Never?

BRIDEGROOM

Well, never again!

CLERGYMAN

So they all say. The answer is almost part of the liturgy. But have a care,

my dear fellow! The true eugenist eschews the wine cup. In every hundred grandchildren of a man who ingests one fluid ounce of alcohol a day, six will be left-handed, twelve will be astigmatic and nineteen will suffer from albuminuria, with delusions of persecution. . . . Have you ever had anthrax?

BRIDEGROOM
Not yet.

CLERGYMAN
Eczema?

BRIDEGROOM
No.

CLERGYMAN
Pott's disease?

BRIDEGROOM
No.

CLERGYMAN
Cholelithiasis?

BRIDEGROOM
No.

CLERGYMAN
Do you have a feeling of distention after meals?

BRIDEGROOM
No.

CLERGYMAN
Have you a dry, hacking cough?

BRIDEGROOM
Not at present.

CLERGYMAN
Are you troubled with insomnia?

BRIDEGROOM
No.

CLERGYMAN
Dyspepsia?

BRIDEGROOM
No.

CLERGYMAN
Agoraphobia?

BRIDEGROOM
No.

CLERGYMAN
Do you bolt your food?

BRIDEGROOM
No.

CLERGYMAN
Have you ever been refused life insurance?

BRIDEGROOM
No.

CLERGYMAN
What is a staphylococcus?

BRIDEGROOM
A staphylococcus is a—(*He hesitates.*)

CLERGYMAN (*coming to the rescue*)
Wilt thou have this woman, etcetera? If so, answer by saying, "I will."

BRIDEGROOM (*much relieved*)
I will.

CLERGYMAN (*turning to the BRIDE*)
Mary, wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband, to live together in the holy state of aseptic matrimony? Wilt thou love him, serve him, protect him from all adulterated victuals, and keep him hygienically clothed; and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live? If so—

BRIDE (*instantly and loudly*)
I will.

CLERGYMAN
Not so fast! First, there is the little ceremony of the clinical thermometer. (*He takes up one of the thermometers.*) Open your mouth, my dear. (*He inserts the thermometer.*) Now hold it there while you count one hundred and fifty. And you, too. (*To the BRIDEGROOM.*) I had almost forgotten you. (*The BRIDEGROOM opens his mouth and the other thermometer is duly planted. While the two are counting, the CLERGYMAN attempts to turn back one of the BRIDE's eyelids, apparently searching for trachoma, but his rubber gloves impede the operation and so he gives it up. It is now time to read the thermometers. The BRIDEGROOM'S is the first removed.*)

CLERGYMAN (*reading the scale*)

Ninety-nine points nine. Considering everything, not so bad. (*Then he removes and reads the BRIDE's.*) Ninety-eight points six. Exactly normal. Cool, collected, at ease. The classical self-possession of the party of the second part. And now, my dear, may I ask you to hold out your tongue?

(*The BRIDE does so.*)

CLERGYMAN

Perfect. . . . There; that will do. Put it back: . . . And now for a few questions—just a few. First, do you use opiates in any form?

BRIDE

No.

CLERGYMAN

Have you ever had goitre?

BRIDE

No.

CLERGYMAN

Yellow fever?

BRIDE

No.

CLERGYMAN

Hæmatemesis?

BRIDE

No.

CLERGYMAN

Siriasis or tachycardia?

BRIDE

No.

CLERGYMAN

What did your maternal grandfather die of?

BRIDE

Of chronic interstitial nephritis.

CLERGYMAN (*interested*)

Ah, our old friend Bright's! A typical case, I take it, with the usual polyuria, œdema of the glottis, flame-shaped retinal hemorrhages and cardiac dilation?

BRIDE

Exactly.

CLERGYMAN

And terminating, I suppose with the classical uræmic symptoms—dyspnœa, convulsions, uræmic amaurosis, coma and collapse?

BRIDE

Including Cheyne-Stokes breathing.

CLERGYMAN

Ah, most interesting! A protean and beautiful malady! But at the moment, of course, we can't discuss it profitably. Perhaps later on. . . . Your father, I assume, is alive?

BRIDE (*indicating him*)

Yes.

CLERGYMAN

Well, then, let us proceed. Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?

FATHER (*with a touch of stage fright*)
I do.

CLERGYMAN (*reassuringly*)

You are in good health?

FATHER

Yes.

CLERGYMAN

No dizziness in the morning?

FATHER

No.

CLERGYMAN

No black spots before the eyes?

FATHER

No.

CLERGYMAN

No vague pains in the small of the back?

FATHER

No.

CLERGYMAN

Gout?

FATHER

No.

CLERGYMAN
Chilblains?

FATHER
No.

CLERGYMAN
Sciatica?

FATHER
No.

CLERGYMAN
Buzzing in the ears?

FATHER
No.

CLERGYMAN
Myopia? Chicken pox? Angina
pectoris?

FATHER
No.

CLERGYMAN
Malaria? Marasmus? Chlorosis?
Tetanus? Quinsy? Housemaid's knee?

FATHER
No.

CLERGYMAN
Well, then, let us go on.
(The CLERGYMAN, dipping his gloved
hands into the bichloride, joins the right
hands of the BRIDE and BRIDEGROOM.)

CLERGYMAN (to the BRIDEGROOM)
Repeat after me: "I, John, take thee,
Mary, to be my wedded and aseptic
wife, to have and to hold from this day
forward, for better, for worse, for richer,
for poorer, in sickness, convalescence,
relapse and health, to love and to cherish,
till death do us part; and thereto I
plight thee my troth."

(The BRIDEGROOM only repeats the
formula. The CLERGYMAN now looses
their hands, and after another dip into the
bichloride, joins them together again.)

CLERGYMAN (to the BRIDE)
Repeat after me: "I, Mary, take thee,
John, to be my aseptic and eugenic
husband, to have and to hold from this

day forward, for better, for worse, for
richer, for poorer, to love, to cherish and
to nurse, till death do us part; and there-
to I give thee my troth."

(The BRIDE duly promises. The BEST
MAN then hands over the ring, which the
CLERGYMAN drops into the bichloride.
It turns green. He fishes it up again, wipes
it dry with a piece of aseptic cotton and
presents it to the BRIDEGROOM, who places
it upon the third finger of the BRIDE's
left hand. Then the CLERGYMAN goes
on with the ceremony, the BRIDEGROOM re-
peating after him.)

CLERGYMAN
Repeat after me: "With this sterile
ring I thee wed, and with all my worldly
goods I thee endow."

(The CLERGYMAN then joins the hands
of the BRIDE and BRIDEGROOM once more,
and dipping his own right hand into the
bichloride, solemnly sprinkles the pair.)

CLERGYMAN
Those whom eugenics have joined to-
gether, let no pathogenic organism put
asunder. (To the assembled company.)
Forasmuch as John and Mary have con-
sented together in aseptic wedlock, and
have witnessed the same by the exchange
of certificates, and have given and
pledged their troth, and have declared
the same by giving and receiving an
aseptic ring, I pronounce that they are
man and wife. In the name of Mendel,
of Galton, of Havelock Ellis and of
David Starr Jordan. Amen.

(The BRIDE and BRIDEGROOM now kiss,
for the first and last time, after which they
gargle with two per cent carbolic and march
out of the room, followed by the BRIDE's
FATHER and the spectators. The BEST
MAN, before departing after them, hands
the CLERGYMAN a ten-dollar gold piece in
a small phial of twenty per cent bichloride.
The CLERGYMAN, after pocketing it,
washes his hands with green soap. The
BRIDESMAIDS proceed to clean up the room
with the remaining bichloride. This done,
they and the CLERGYMAN go out. As soon
as they are gone, the operating table is
pushed back into place by an orderly, a
patient is brought in, and a surgeon
proceeds to cut off his legs.)

TO CERTAIN POETS

By Joyce Kilmer

NOW is the rhymers' honest trade
A thing for scornful laughter made.

The merchant's sneer, the clerk's disdain,
These are the burden of our pain.

Because of you did this befall,
You brought this shame upon us all,

You little poets mincing there
With women's hearts and women's hair!

How sick Dan Chaucer's ghost must be
To hear you lisp of "Poesie"!

A heavy-handed blow, I think,
Would make your veins drip scented ink.

You strut and smirk your little while
So mildly, delicately vile!

Your tiny voices mock God's wrath,
You snails that crawl along His path!

Why, what has God or man to do
With wet, amorphous things like you?

This thing alone you have achieved:
Because of you, it is believed

That all who earn their bread by rhyme
Are like yourselves, exuding slime!

Oh, cease to write, for very shame,
Ere all men spit upon our name!

Take up your needles, drop your pen,
And leave the poet's craft to men!

A SHEPHERDESS OF FAUNS

By F. Tennyson Jesse

ARCHIE LETHBRIDGE arrived in Provence thoroughly satisfied with life in general and himself in particular. He had just sold a big picture; was contemplating, with every prospect of success, giving a "one-man show" in Boston of the work he would do in Provence—and the girl he loved had accepted the offer of his hand and heart.

Miss Gwendolen Gould was eminently eligible. Her income, though comfortable, was not large enough to brand her husband as a fortune hunter; she was pretty in a well-bred way that satisfied the eye without causing it to turn and gaze after her; and, above all, she could be relied upon never to do, say or think an unusual thing. Like all painters, when they are conventionally minded, Archie was the pink of propriety—he owned to enough wild oats of his own sowing to save him from inferiority in the society of his fellow men, and he held exceedingly rigid views on the subject of his womenkind. Gwendolen might—doubtless had, for she was one of the large army of young women brought up to no profession save that of sex—give this or that man a kiss at a dance, but she would never have saved all of passion and possibilities for one man, and lavished them on him, regardless of suitable circumstances. Archie's name (that he hoped one day to adorn with some coveted letters at which he now pretended to sneer) would be perfectly safe in Gwendolen's carefully manicured hands.

The only drawback to his complete content was that his fair, sleek person showed signs of getting a trifle too plump—for he was only young as a man who

is nearly "arrived" counts youth. On the whole, however, it was with a feeling of settled attainment that Archie arrived at Nice and proceeded to strike up into the Alpes Maritimes, totally unprepared for any bizarre or inexplicable events—he would have laughed satirically at the bare idea.

To do him justice, he worked hard, and he had a tremendous facility and a certain charm that concealed his lack of true artistic sensitiveness. He painted here and there from Grasse to Le Broc, and then one day, feeling he had taken all he could from the soft-scented land of olives and flowers, he hired a motor to convey him up into the Back o' Beyond and drop him there.

After that he saw no living thing, neither bird nor beast nor human, for many miles: only rounded hills, opening out from each other in endless succession and covered with harsh yellow grass and strewn with gray boulders; deep gullies that at one time had been set alight and now were scorched and brown like plague pits, with here and there a patch of pale stones showing up lividly from the charred thorns and blackened soil. Archie shivered, partly because of the keen wind blowing down from the great plateau beyond the hills, partly because something savage in the scene gripped at him.

The car throbbed on, higher and higher, till the road, winding acutely along the edge of precipices, developed a surface that caused his chauffeur to swear gently to himself. Valley after valley opened out, long and narrow, and Archie noticed signs of a long-past cultivation in the curved terraces into which the bed of each valley was cut,

and forming an endless series of semi-circles. There was no trace of any crops, and the whole effect was of some rude amphitheater where Neolithic man sat round and watched gladiatorial shows.

The car, sticking now and then in a rut, or jolting violently over stones, finally crested the last rise, and Archie found himself on a vast stretch of land ringed in by sharp-edged hills, like some dead, gigantic crater; to the right, far away on a slope of the mountain ring, lay a gray straggling town that seemed hacked out of the hardened lava. The only sign of life was in a patch of vividly green grass near at hand, where hundreds of crocuses had burned their way up through the earth and showed like a bed of thin blue flames.

Archie directed the contemptuous chauffeur toward the town, and they finally drew up at the inn—a little, green-shuttered affair, with a stone-flagged passage, and a tortoise shell cat drowsing beside the door. Outside a *buvette* opposite was a marble-topped table at which sat a couple of workmen drinking cider. An evanescent gleam of sun shone out, and the tawny liquid caught and held it, making each glass throw onto the table a bubble of gold fire enmeshed in the delicate shadow of the vessel itself. Archie stood transfixed for a moment with pleasure; then, as the gleam faded and died, he entered the inn.

Like most people with the creative temperament, Archie Lethbridge was the prey of environment. Draginoules took such a deep, sure grip on Archie that it did more than merely affect his work—it began to upset his neatly arranged values and to substitute fresh ones in their place. Draginoules, in short, behaved like a master of scenic effects, it allowed a couple of days for the background to permeate Archie's consciousness, and, when he was ripe for it, introduced the human element, which, to a man, must of necessity mean a woman.

It was one morning, when he was

washing brushes in the dim inn kitchen, that he saw her first. She came out of the *buvette* to serve some workmen, and Archie stopped dead in the act of swirling a cobalt-laden brush round and round in the hollowed yellow soap he held. He always saw the whole scene in memory as clearly as he saw it then: the low-fronted *buvette*, the glass of the door refracting the light as it still quivered from her passage; the pools of blue shadow that lay under the table and chairs on the pavement; the blouse-clad figures of the workmen, particularly a young man with a deeply burnt back to his neck; and the girl herself, holding aloft a tray of liqueur glasses, that winked like little eyes. All this he saw framed by the darkness of the kitchen and cut sharply into squares by the black bars of the window; then, as he mechanically went on frothing blue-stained bubbles out of the soap, he said to himself: "I must paint that girl."

He found that she was the niece of the stout couple who kept the place, and her name was Désirée Prevost. As they mentioned her, most people shrugged their shoulders. Oh, no, there was nothing against the girl—and though it was true her eyebrows met in a thick bar across her nose, and old people had always said that was a sign of the *loup-garou* enlightened moderns did not really hold by that. The town was proud of her looks, for it considered her "*très bien*," the highest expression of praise from a Provençal, who is a dour kind of person.

Archie approached the aunt of Désirée on the subject of sittings with some trepidation, but met with an agreeable pliancy from her, and a calm, though indifferent assent from Désirée herself. She had a high opinion of her own value, and no amount of appreciation surprised her.

Scanning her afresh as they stood on the pavement making final arrangements, Archie inwardly congratulated himself. From the heavy brass-colored hair massed with a sculptured effect round her well poised head to the firmly planted feet, admirably proportioned to

the rest of her, she was entirely right for his purpose—she seemed the spirit of Draginoules incarnate. Owing to the opaque pallor of her skin, her level bar of fair eyebrow and heavily folded lids, big, finely modeled nose and faintly tinted mouth, all took on a sculptured quality that made for repose; the very shadows of her face were delicate in tone, mere breaths of shadows. Yet she was excessively vital, but it was a smoldering, restrained vitality suggestive of a quiescent crater. Her face was too individual to be perfect—the nose a trifle too big, the brow a shade too narrow for the full modeling across the cheekbones; but she had an egglike curve from turn of jaw to pointed chin. When she laughed her teeth showed large and strong, and her throat was the loveliest Archie had ever seen—magnificently big—and she had a trick of tilting her head back that made the smoothly knitted muscles of her neck swell a little under the white skin. As he painted her Archie used to find himself racking his brains for some speech that would make her head take that upward poise, so that he could watch the play of throat.

He chose his background well: a sheltered spot in a fold of hill just beyond the town, where a slim young oak sapling still retained its copper-hued autumn leaves, that seemed almost fiery against the deep, soft blue of the sky. He had conceived of her as standing under the oak tree, so that, to him, working lower down on the slope, she, too, showed against the sky, seemingly caught in a network of delicate boughs. Being below her, he was also the richer by the soft, three-cornered shadow under her chin, and the whole of her became a tone of exquisite delicacy, as of shadowed ivory, in the setting of skys—that sky of Southern spring which seems literally drenched in light. The tawny note of the oak leaves was to be repeated in some sheep, which, though kept subservient to the figure of Désirée, were to supply the motive of the picture—or so Archie thought till the sudden freak that made him introduce the fauns.

Désirée was all for robing herself in her best—a black silk bodice with a high collar, and a betrailed, jet-spangled skirt, but Archie coaxed her into wearing the dress he first saw her in: a mere wrapper of indefinite prune color, belted in at the waist to show the lines of her deep-chested, long-flanked figure, and cut so low as to leave her throat bare from the pit of it. Her sleeves were rolled back to the elbow and her arms showed milk white as far as the reddened wrists and the big work-roughened hands that held a hazel switch across her thighs.

Archie was Anglo-Saxon enough to feel a slight stiffness at the first sitting, but Désirée was a stranger to the sensation of tied tongue.

"I like the Americans," she announced. "Not many of them come here, but I have not spent my life in Draginoules, no, indeed! I was in a laundry once at La Madeleine. Do you know it? It is where they take in the washing of Nice. So I used to go much into Nice, and an English lady there painted me. She had a talent! She made me look beautiful. In Draginoules, do you know what they call me? They call me '*l'Américaine manquée*.'"

"Because you like them so?" asked Archie.

"Because I have the nature, the habits of an American woman. Oh, I assure you! I like to live out of doors—to be out all day with one's bread and a bottle of wine, and sleep on the hillside—that is what I call living. I always open my window at night, though my aunt says it is a folly. I could go to England if I chose, as a maid. My English lady would have me. Ah, how I long to see England! One gets so tired of Draginoules."

"But your friends—you would be sorry to leave them?"

"Oh, for that, I do not care about the people of Draginoules. It was my mother's place, not mine. I was born in Lyons, where my father was a silk weaver. But he was a bad kind of man, so I came to my aunt to live. I do not think much of the people of Dragi-

noules. They all like me, but I do not like them!"

"Why don't you go to England, then? Though I think you are far better here!" quoth Archie, on whom the glamour of the place was strong.

"My fiancé would kill himself," said Désirée serenely.

"Oh—you are *fiancée*?" murmured Archie, wondering why he felt that absurd mingling of relief and regret.

"To a mechanic in Nice. We are to marry when he gets a rise. *Hélas, je ne serai plus fille!*"

Her words, so simply and directly spoken, caught at Archie's imagination.

"What a *vierge farouche*!" he said to himself. "If I can get that feeling into my picture!" Aloud he said: "And your fiancé—he is very devoted, then?"

"He adores me. It is a perfect folly, see you, to feel for anyone what he does for me. He is mad about me."

Archie returned to the theme next time she posed for him.

"So you think a man can care too much for a woman?" he asked, and stopped for a moment with raised brush to watch her answer. She shrugged her shoulders.

"As to that, I think women are worth it. But it is foolish to care everything for one person."

"You could care for others, then—as well as M. Colombini?" asked Archie, with a sudden stir at his pulses.

"I? One can care a little—here and there. But commit a folly for a man, that is a thing I would never do. And I am very fond of Auguste. If I did not think we should be happy and faithful I should not marry him. I look round on all the married people I know, and see nothing but betrayal everywhere. Here a husband plays his wife false; there she in turn cheats him. Bah—it is not good, that!"

"How right you are," said Archie virtuously. "But you do not then think it necessary to care as much for Auguste as he cares for you?"

"*Dame*, no! How should I? He pleases me, and he is good—I can respect him. And I like him to kiss me. . . ." The most charming look of self-consciousness

mingled with reminiscence flitted over her face. "But for him—he is mad when he kisses me. Women do not care like that. It is a folly. And it is always happier, monsieur, when it is the husband who cares the most. That is how men are made."

Oh, yes, thought Archie, she was woman, after ail, this *vierge farouche*, and more unshamedly woman, franker in her admissions of knowledge—for she admitted in her expressive face and gestures more than she actually said—than any woman of his world. He worked in silence for a while, then told her to rest.

She flung herself on the turf with an abandonment of limb and muscle usually only seen in young animals, and he came and lay a little below her, and lit a cigarette. Désirée lay serenely, her face upturned, and he studied her thoughtfully.

"Surely very few of your countrywomen are as blonde as you," he said. "Your eyes are blue, and your brows and lashes a faint brown, and your hair is—"

He paused, at a loss how to describe her hair. It was not golden—rather that strong brass color that, had he seen it on a sophisticated townswoman, he would have dubbed "peroxide." It was oddly metallic hair, not only in its color but in the carven ripples of it where she wore it pulled across her low brow and massed in heavy braids round her head. That way of wearing her hair right down to her brows, except for a narrow white triangle of forehead showing, boylike, at one side, gave her an oddly animal look—using the word in its best sense. A look as of some low-browed, heavy-tressed faun, fearless and unashamed—it was only in her eyes that mystery lay.

"My hair?" she exclaimed, showing her big white teeth in a laugh as frank as a boy's. "But that, you know, is not natural. It was an accident."

"An accident! How on earth—"

"Why, I was doing the *ménage* for a chemist and his wife over the border, at Vintimile. And she had her hair like this. One day she gave me a little bottle and said: 'Désirée, you're a good girl, but you don't know how to make the best of yourself. Put some of this on your head.' I rubbed some on one side only, just to

see what would happen, and next day I found one-half of my head golden—golden like the sun. 'Mon Dieu,' I said, 'but what do I look like, one-half yellow and one-half brown?' So I poured it on all over. It is nothing now, because I have not put on the stuff for so long; but at one time it was beautiful. Such hair! Below my waist, and gold, oh, such a gold! Now, it wants doing again."

She ducked her head down for him to see the crown of it, and he perceived from the parting outward two inches of unabashed dark hair—almost blue it looked by contrast with the circling wrappings of yellow. Archie, immensely tickled at finding such a splendid young savage in the Back o' Beyond with dyed hair, could but shout with mirth. Désirée, totally unoffended, joining in; and when he went back that evening he felt he knew her far better than on the preceding day.

The next day he unconsciously took up their conversation of the day before. They were resting again, for he said it was too hot to work; and the sunset effect he wanted was growing later every day.

"So you could care a little for someone else before you marry Auguste?" he suggested, lightly enough, and looking away from her to the snow mountains that bared white fangs in the blue of the sky.

She laughed a little, stretched herself, drooped her lids, was in a flash and for a flash entirely woman—alluring, withdrawing, sure of herself. As she gained in poise Archie felt his own tenure of self-control slipping away from him.

"Could you?" he persisted, his eyes by now back on her changing face.

"How does one care? What is it?" she evaded. "I do not think you would be able to tell me. You are so cold, so English; you would care just as much as would be pleasant, and never enough to make you uncomfortable."

The penetration of this remark displeased Archie.

"But you are like that yourself," he objected. "You are the most cool, calculating girl I ever met—everything you say shows it."

She rolled over slightly on the grass, so that her head, the chin thrust forward on her cupped hands, was brought nearer to

him but kept at the provocative three-quarter angle suggestive of withdrawal. Her thick, heavy lids were drooped, but suddenly they flickered, and half rose to show a gleam so wild, so unlike anything he had ever seen in her, that Archie caught his breath. It was as though some alien spirit, a pagan, woodland thing, was looking at him through the eyes of the self-possessed, level-headed young woman, who at times even seemed more bourgeois than peasant.

"Désirée! How beautiful you are!" he cried.

"As beautiful as mademoiselle your fiancée?" asked Désirée.

With a run Archie descended into the commonplace, and Désirée became for him nothing but a pretty girl who went rather too far.

"Americans do not care to discuss the ladies of their choice," he said grandiloquently. "May I ask how you knew I was *fiancé*?"

"I have seen her picture in your room," said Désirée frankly; "the *patronne* told me there was one there. She is pretty—very pretty. Her hair is so beautifully done in all those little rolls, one would say it must be false. She is altogether *mignonne*—one would say the head of a doll!"

Désirée was absolutely sincere in thinking she was giving Miss Gwendolen Gould the highest praise possible. She would willingly have exchanged her splendid muscular body for the slim, correctly corseted form of Miss Gould, and have bartered her strongly modeled head for the small, regular features and Marcel-waved hair of the other girl. It was only his perception of this that kept Archie from anger, and as it was the truth of the praise hit him sharply. That night he sat down before the miniature and conscientiously tried to conjure up the emotions of a lover. The experiment was a failure.

When he came to go to bed he found a sprig of myrtle lying on his pillow.

"How did that get here, I wonder?" he asked himself, and then stooped, with an exclamation of disgust. A corner of the turned-back sheet that trailed on the floor was lightly powdered with earth as though a muddy shoe had stood on it. The footprint—if footprint it were—was

oddly impossible in shape, short and rounded, more like the mark of a hoof.

"Can the *patronne's* goat have got up here? I saw it wandering in the passage today," thought Archie vexedly. "Beastly animal to drop half-chewed green food all over my pillow!"

The injured man thumped his pillow and turned it over, so that the despised myrtle sprig lay crushed beneath it. Then he went to bed and to sleep.

"I dreamt of you all night, *Désirée*," he told her next day, "and I feel as tired as though it had all been real."

"We are polite today!" laughed *Désirée*.

"Wait till you hear. I was pursuing you round rocks and over streams and through undergrowth all night long. You were you, and yet you weren't. Somehow I got the impression that it was you as you would have been hundreds and thousands of years ago. And I kept on losing you, and then little satyrs beckoned at me to show me the way you'd gone, and I stumbled on after hoofs that were always flashing up just ahead—just vanishing round corners."

"Satyrs? What are they?" asked *Désirée*.

Archie explained as picturesquely as possible, but was brought to a stop by a curious change in *Désirée's* eyes. They wore the strained, misty look of the person who is trying hard to catch at some long-lost memory. Again he was startled by that strange feeling that something else was looking from between those placid lids of hers.

"But I know!" she began. "Those creatures you are telling me—*what* is it I know about them?" She broke off and shook herself impatiently. "Bah! It is gone. And then what happened—did you find me at the end?"

"I can't quite remember," said Archie slowly. "Something happened, but what it was is all blurred. I believe you're a wood nymph, *Désirée*—a wood nymph whose father was a satyr—and he chased and caught your mother and took her down through his tangle of underbrush with his hands in her hair, never heeding her screams. You have very definite little points at the top of your ears, you

know. We all have them a bit to remind us of our wild dog days, but yours are the most pronounced I've ever seen. Do you never take off all your clothes and go creeping and slipping through the woods at night, to bathe in one of the crater pools by the light of the moon?"

"How did you know?" She turned wide, startled eyes on him; her quickened breath fluttered her gown distressfully.

"What! You do it, then?" exclaimed Archie.

"No, no! What folly are you talking?" She sprang to her feet and slipped behind the oak sapling, as though it were a defence against some danger; across the boughs he saw her puzzled, fearful eyes. As he watched her, the expression of alarm faded—she put up her hand to her hair, gave it a quieting pat and tucked some stray strands into place, then she looked across at the easel.

"It must be time to work again!" she exclaimed. "Have we been resting long, m'sieu? I feel as though I'd been asleep and you'd just wakened me." She yawned as she spoke, stretching her strong arms in a slow, wide circle, the muscles of her shoulders rounding forward and making two little hollows appear above her collarbones. The sight aroused the artist in Archie, and he, too, scrambled up, and betook himself to work. The sheep, that he had bribed the shepherd to pasture there, happened to come as he wanted them that evening, and he began to work away in silence. One of the goats, a piebald, shaggy creature, reared itself up on its hind legs, with its forefeet against the tree trunk, and began to nibble at the foliage. Something about the pose of the creature sent a swift suggestion to Archie's mind, and he just had time to rough in the legs, with their slight outward tilt, the hoofs set firmly apart and the tail sticking out and up from the sharply curved-in rump, before the animal dropped on all fours and moved away. Archie, with the smile of the creator in his eyes, worked on, and the goat's legs merged into the beginnings of a slim human body with the hands leaning against the tree and the head, tilted on one side, peering round at the figure of *Désirée*.

Suddenly he gave an exclamation of annoyance.

"What is the matter?" asked Désirée.

"There is someone watching us from those myrtle bushes. Confound the beggar—someone from the village, I suppose!"

Désirée turned sharply, just in time to see a brown face grinning through the leaves. It was a face compact of curiously slanting lines—upward-twitched tufts of brows, upward wrinkles at the corners of the narrow eyes, and a slanting mouth that laughed above a pointed, thrusting chin.

"That! That is only my little brother, m'sieu. It is one of God's innocents, and lame on both feet. Sylvestre! Come out and speak to m'sieu—no one will hurt you."

The bushes rustled and parted, and an odd little figure, apparently that of a boy of about ten, came scrambling out with a queer, lunging action from the hips. The child's legs were deformed, but he swung himself forward at a marvelous speed on a pair of clumsy crutches. Archie saw that when he was not laughing his brown eyes were wide and grave, with a look of innocence in them that contrasted oddly with the knowing gleam they showed a minute earlier.

"But he is exactly what I want for the picture!" cried Archie, running his hand through the boy's tangled curls and tilting his face gently backward. "He is exactly like the things I was telling you of. He must sit to me."

He deftly tugged the boy's shirt out of his belt and peeled it off him, exposing a thin little brown body with a skin as fine as a girl's. When he felt the sun on his bare flesh the child made guttural sounds of delight, flinging himself backward on the ground, and, supported by his hands, letting his head tip back till his curls touched the grass. As the shielding locks fell away, Archie saw with a thrill that was almost repulsion that dark brown hair grew thickly out of the boy's ears.

"Would he stay still, do you think?" he asked Désirée.

"He will, if I tell him," replied Désirée. "Come to me, Sylvestre," and

drawing the child to her, she stroked his head and whispered to him.

After the addition of Sylvestre the picture made great strides, even if the intimacy between Archie and Désirée advanced less rapidly than before. And yet every now and again, in sudden flashes of wildness, in a half-uttered phrase totally at variance with her normal self—little things that she seemed to remember from some forgotten whole, Désirée would give him that impression of being two people at once; and always, on these occasions, she was as puzzled as he, and with an added touch of something that seemed almost shame. For the everyday Désirée, that calm, practical and comely young woman, Archie's friendliness was touched by nothing warmer than the inevitable element of sex; but the shy, bold thing that sometimes peeped from between her lids, that thing that seemed to take possession of her beautiful body, and mock and allure and chill him in a breath, that thing was waking an answering spirit in himself, and he knew it.

Miss Gould's portrait was unable to protect him from wakeful nights, when he turned his pillow again and again to find a cool surface for his cheek—nights when he would at last fling off the bedclothes and lean out of the window to watch the steel blue dawn turn to the light of everyday. He was living in a state of tension, and it seemed to him that some great event was holding its breath to spring, as though the very trees and rocks, the brooding sky and quiescent pools, were all in some conspiracy, hoodwinking yet preparing him for the moment of revelation.

It was onto the sensitive surface of this mood that a letter from Gwendolen, announcing her speedy arrival in Provence, dropped like a dart, tearing the delicate tissues and stinging the fibres to the necessity for haste. Gwendolen, aunt-dragoned, and Baedeker in hand, meant the return to the acceptance of the old values that had once filled him with complacency. And yet, with all the jarring sense of intrusion Gwendolen's advent instilled, mingled a feeling that was almost relief—as though he was being saved, against his will but with his judg-

ment, from something too disturbing and beautiful to be quite comfortable.

Three or four days after receiving Gwendolen's letter, he put the last touches to the picture and informed Désirée he would need her no more. She received the news quite calmly, apparently without regret. Archie felt absurdly flat as he wrapped up his wet brushes in a week old sheet of the *Petit Niçois*. He also felt very virtuous, and told himself it was not many men who would have refrained from making love to the girl under the circumstances.

There was a little hut, used for stacking wood, close to where he worked, and here, thanks to the courtesy of the owner, he was wont to put his picture for the night. Désirée, as usual, helped him to carry it in and plant the legs of the easel firmly into the earthen floor. He had worked late, and the sun had just slipped behind the far ridge of the mountains: the tiny hut was filled with a deepening half-light; the stacked brushwood seemed wine-colored in the warm shadow; here and there a peeled twig stood out luminously. By the open door hoofmarks in the trampled earth showed that the *patronne's* mule had been carrying away wood that morning. That was as palpable as the fact that it must have been Sylvestre's deformed foot which had soiled Archie's sheet, yet those marks recreated the atmosphere of his dream, and seemed, in the sudden confusion mounting to his brain at the warmth and nearness of Désirée, to mix madly with Sylvestre, and rustled undergrowth and the glimmer of elusive hoofs round myrtle bushes—and the glimmer of something whiter and more elusive still.

He could hear Désirée's breathing beside him—not as even as usual, but deeper-drawn and uncertain; and turning, he met the sidelong glance of her eyes.

"Désirée—you said you sometimes slipped out at night and played in the woods—and the pools. Take me out with you tonight and show me where you go and what you do. I'll be awfully good—I swear I will; you're not a woman—you're a nymph, a strange, uncanny thing. I believe you meet your kinsfolk there and dance with them, Désirée!"

She looked at him for a moment in silence. In her eyes her normal and her unknown selves contended.

"It is true I often go out as you say; something drives me, but I do not know why myself. And I get very tired and can never remember clearly what it has been like. It is as though I did it almost in my sleep, or had dreamt it."

"It is a dream—everything's a dream, and I've got to wake up soon. Let's have this bit of dream together—Désirée!"

She yielded. They took bread and wine and apples for a midnight feast, and set off together over the lava fields to the woods that tufted the mountain slopes. Through the deep, soft light the pallor of her face and throat glimmered as through dark water. She held his hand to guide him over the fissures and round the piled bowlders; once he slipped on a hummock of hard grass, and felt her grow rigid on the instant to check his fall. They were silent, until, seated at the edge of the woods, they ate their supper, and then they laughed softly together like children, with fragmentary speech; and once Désirée sang a snatch of a Provençal song, Archie, who knew his Mistral, joining in.

Presently, when they fell on silence again, it seemed the wood was full of noises—stealthy footfalls, snapping of dry twigs, the rustling of parted shrubs. As the late moon, almost at the full, swam up the sky, making the distant snowpeaks gleam like white flames against the dusky blue, and shimmering on the pools cupped here and there over the hollowed expanse below, Archie could have sworn that the penetrating light showed quick-glancing faces and bright eyes from the thicket. Once a great white owl did sail out with a beating of wings, so close to them that they could see the stiff brows that bristled over his lambent orbs; and once a strong smell and a gleam of black and white told of a wild-cat tracking her prey.

They buried the disfiguring remnants of their little feast, and then Archie solemnly poured out what was left of the red wine onto the slope below.

"For the gods!" he announced. "The liquor for us and the dregs for them!"

"Ah," cried Désirée, as though his ac-

tion pricked sleeping memories to life, "now I remember it all again! I forget when I go home, but then the next time everything is clear again, and so it goes on."

She disappeared in a jutting spur of the wood, and Archie scrambled to his feet and followed her. As he broke through to the further edge, which hung over a wide pool, he caught his foot in something soft—*Désirée's* clothes that lay in a fairy circle, just as she had slipped out of them.

She stood at the pool's brim, her hands clasped at the back of her head, a thing to dream of. She was so lovely that all feeling died save a passionate appreciation, keen to the verge of pain; she was so lovely that of necessity she awoke an impersonal emotion. Slowly she stretched herself, and as the muscles rippled into curves and sank, the delicate shadows ebbed and breathed on the pearl white of her body. Archie's every nerve was strung not to lose one line or one breath of tone.

Putting out a foot, she touched the water, so that little tremors soft as feathers fled over the surface; then, as she waded in, deeper and deeper, the water parted from her in flakes of brightness that shook and mixed up and broke away. When she rose, dripping wet, the moonlight refracted off her was mirrored in the water, and thrown back again on her—a magic shuttle weaving an aura of whiteness. Long arrows of light fled back through the pool as she waded to shore, where she stood for a moment motionless; head slightly forward, arms hanging, and one hip thrown outward as she poised her weight. Myriads of tiny, crescent-shaped drops clung to her limbs like fish scales, so that she seemed more mermaid than wood nymph; but Archie's eyes proclaimed her *Artemis*—she would have calmed a satyr as she stood. Thoughts of forest glades where chill, sweet sports were held, and the wildest hoof was tamed to the childlike kinship with nature that is pagan innocence, floated through his mind like visible things.

Suddenly she became conscious of his presence, and gave one glance in which invitation and a certain calm aloofness seemed to mingle.

"*Désirée!*" stammered Archie. "*Désirée!*"

Excitement tingled through him, blurring his ideas, just as chloroform sets the blood pricking with thousands of points and edges, while dizzying the brain. She stood still a second longer; then, either the fearful nymphswayed her utterly, or, as it seemed to Archie, a sudden rejection of him, the clumsy, civilized mortal, sprang into her eyes. She flung up her head, turned and was gone in the tangle of the woods. Without more than a second's hesitation he plunged in after her.

To Archie, whenever he looked back, that night seemed an orgy of chase-gone-mad, gathering in force as it went and sweeping into its resistless flow the most incongruous of elements.

He ran after her, stumbling, tripping, whipped across the face by brambles. Everything in life was crystallized into the desire to catch up, to track her to the enchanted green where, with her, he could become part of a remote free life he had never imagined before. All his own personality, except that in him which was hers, had ceased to exist; work, *Gwendolen*, the great world and the inn at *Draginoules* were wiped out of knowledge by the force of his concentration on one thing. The arbitrary line drawn between the actual and the unreal, the credible and the impossible, sanity and so-called madness, was swept away. She, the descendant of the gods, knew what strange race—a race that perhaps had lingered in these crater fastnesses and myrtled groves long after it had died off the rest of the earth—was fleeing before him through a wood alive with brightened eyes and quickened hoofs; and in her veins the slender strain of blood derived from some goat-legged, tall-eared thing—a strain asleep through the generations of her ancestors, had mastered all the rest of her heritage, and was as triumphant in her soul as in *Sylvester's* body. She ran on, swiftly and without effort, and Archie ran after her.

A large red motor car had been panting down through the *Midi* all day, hoping to arrive at *Draginoules* from the further

side of the tableland. The chauffeur, who was a Gascon, would have died sooner than admit ignorance, and had taken whatever road seemed best to him; and the small hours of the morning found the red car, bereft of petrol, its acetylene at the last gasp and with a burst tire, stranded on a mountain pass high above the few faint lights of Draginoules. By the failing lamps the two ladies and the chauffeur tried to understand a road map with the result that they decided the lights must be those of Grasse, little knowing they proceeded from the electrically lit wash houses of Draginoules, where the women washed long before dawn.

The chauffeur addressed his passengers at length. He urged them to find their way down on foot; they had merely to follow the road, while he stayed with his sacred trust, the car. He did not add that he would sleep very comfortable inside it. The dawn would be breaking in an hour or so, and the saints would guard them, and Americans were always safe. Besides, what was there to fear? They would soon reach those lights and find a good bed, and, he added cunningly, a cup of tea. The elder lady was visibly allured by the prospect, but shudderingly declared, in French strongly tinged with a transatlantic accent, that they would be robbed and murdered.

"Nonsense, aunt," said the younger lady ruthlessly. "Who is there to rob and murder us? We'd far better go on now."

She thought to herself that if one must arrive at a hotel luggageless, disheveled and with one's fringe out of curl, it was better to do so at night than in the unsympathetic face of day and the eye of man. Her aunt wavered and gave in, after warning her dear Gwen against blaming her if they were killed; and the two ladies, grasping their little vanity-bags, set off down the mountain. And somewhere the gods that pull the wires were laughing as they drew toward each other, under incongruous conditions, four people whom those conditions made utterly incompatible.

Archie was shockingly out of condition. It was years since the running

muscles of his legs had received any systematic encouragement, and his layer of superfluous flesh, though slight, shook with each stride, but he stumbled on. Each time he caught Désirée's low, mocking laugh it seemed a little further away, and now on one side and then the other, till he was running blindly, on and on; and, little as he knew it, toward the curve of the mountain track. Gwendolen and her aunt, tramping down it, heard the running feet and the breaking of bushes in the wooded slopes above them, and their hearts turned to water. They dived into that part of the woods which sloped below the road, and a moment later heard the footsteps crossing the stones of the track. . . .

Dawn broke at last, reluctant, chill, showing the woods clear-edged and motionless as though cut out of steel; glimmering on the quiet pools and the ribbed lava slopes, though the hollow of the plain still held a great lake of shadow.

Désirée's clothes lay no longer by the pool where she had bathed; no trace of human presence remained; even the marshy edge showed only trampled footmarks, as though some goat-footed herd had watered there.

The human element was soon to be added, for, just as the cold blue light was bleaching to a pearly pallor, the strangest figure those woods had ever known came bursting and tumbling through them. Gwendolen's aunt did not look her best after a couple of hours' strenuous exercise through shrubs, with her motor bonnet on one side, her skirts torn, one shoe gone forever, and her once-elaborate gray locks hanging on her shoulders, the wire frame of her "pompadour" showing through the disordered hair in front. She sank down on a rock, with an expression of resignation on her heat-mottled face.

Archie, breaking through the trees a few moments later, with quivering legs, only spurred on by the expectation of at last finding Désirée, thought his brain must have given way under the emotions of the past night. The fact that he was gazing on the elder Miss Gould and had apparently been pursuing the elder Miss Gould—was in itself so impossible that

it seemed equally natural to attribute it to hallucination or to a disordered universe, or even to wonder whether Désirée were, after all, a *loup-garou* who took on the form of others at will. Whether he or Miss Gould would have been the first to break the silence he never knew, for with a faint cry of "Aunt!" someone fell onto him from behind, only to recoil with a gasp of dismay. He was past surprise as he turned to support Gwendolen.

"Your aunt is here," he said, with the calm of utter indifference. "She is sitting on a stone."

"Archie! Archie! Then it was you—you who were chasing us?"

"Chasing you! I didn't know you were in France! I was chasing—" He stopped abruptly.

"Chasing whom?" put in the elder Miss Gould, turning to gaze at him from beneath the wry pompadour.

"Chasing no one, of course," said Archie hastily. "Whom did *you* think you were chasing, Gwendolen? I must say I am surprised to find you running after a young man like that. And in the woods at night, too! I think you owe me an explanation!"

"*Il* I lost aunt, and must have gone in a circle and got behind you, and then thought you were aunt. It seems to me the question is—who did you think aunt was?"

"I," broke in Miss Gould, "was pursuing someone whom I took for Gwendolen. Mr. Lethbridge—who was it?"

"I don't know," said Archie wearily; "I only wish someone could tell me, for I'm hanged if I know even *what* it was!"

They all three lay back in exhausted silence, looking at each other. The searching light of dawn revealed with pitiless impartiality not only their scratches and stains, but their suspicions and bitterness; the lack of harmony with their dignified and reticent surroundings. Nothing lovely or large found any kinship in them; they were conventional little souls in conventional little bodies, and they and their suspicions and explanations seemed of an awful insignificance—even to themselves.

The livid silver line edging the seaward

mountains changed to fire, while the air grew vibrant with a warmer light. Far below the roofs of Draginoules caught the gleam as the sun swam up above the loftiest range, and the first skeins of smoke changed from blue to a dusty gold. Day, warm, human everyday, had come at last, and the cruel hour of searching was over. Archie's hand instinctively went to his tie, while the women straightened their bonnets and put back the wisps of hair.

They all chatted a little in a desultory manner as Archie led the way to the village, and they all avoided each other's eyes. The women felt that nature had tricked them in some incomprehensible way into emotion of which they were ashamed, and Archie was once more of their world; they owned him as strongly as though he had never broken away. Not as completely—for him there would always be a half-fearful but half-wonderful memory.

Once, several years later, he told an analytical friend the whole story, and received an explanation that should have satisfied him. His friend descanted on the way in which the glamour of the place had strung his nerves to receptiveness; analyzed with delight the pagan temperament of Désirée—doubtless a throwback—and the wildness of the peasant blood in her which, combined with the superstitious strain she probably drew from her Provençal mother, filled her with inherited cravings that seemed almost to assume the force of memories. He pointed out how Archie had described satyrs to her before she professed to remember anything about them, and dismissed the case of Sylvestre with a few remarks of a physiological nature. The apparently dual nature of the girl was a simple enough phenomenon, in the nature of a hysterical trance. When he came to the more subtle problem of the second self that had awakened in Archie at Désirée's ascent from the pool, the conviction of those chill, sweet revels and twilight paganism that had enveloped his consciousness, his theories took a psychological turn. Given Archie's state of unnatural receptiveness and the undoubted sincerity of Désirée's emotional trance, the ef-

fect of the latter upon the former would be quite sufficient to create an aura that would envelop them like a reality.

On that day itself Archie was far from wrestling with any theories, and he grasped at actualities to keep his poise. Toward evening, when clean beds and hot water had completed the regeneration of the ladies, he took Gwendolen to see the picture. She knew nothing of painting, but had enough tact not to make Archie shiver by saying that she "knew what she liked." Perhaps Archie's somewhat elaborately careless references to Désirée in his letters had made her a trifle uneasy—for under her smart shirtwaist she possessed, if not a womanly, still a feminine, heart—but the picture quite reassured her. The girl was not in the least pretty, merely a big, strong peasant; and how funny of Archie to have put little fauns among the sheep!

"I don't know why I did it myself," confessed Archie, "but it's given me a good title for it. I call it, 'A Shepherdess of Fauns.'"

"It ought to sell easily," remarked

Gwendolen, as they turned to go back to the inn.

"I'm not sure I want to sell it," replied Archie. But he did sell it, for a very good price, and he was glad when it was gone. No one really likes to be reminded of the times when he dared approach nature unashamedly; and Archie, unlike Désirée the girl, who never remembered Désirée the nymph, had to cultivate his forgetfulness for himself.

They met Désirée outside the *buvette*; and Gwendolen, who had often been admired for her charming manners with the lower classes, spoke very kindly to her and asked about her marriage. Désirée, who looked pale and jaded, and not at all at her best, replied briefly, but with the true peasant dignity. It appeared she was going to be married very soon—Monsieur Colombini had had a rise that justified it.

"What would you have, mademoiselle?" concluded Désirée, with a shrug. "The men will not be kept waiting forever. And one must do something, after all!"



"PHASELLUS ILLE"

By Ezra Pound

THIS *papier-mâché*, which you see, my friends,

Saith 'twas the worthiest of editors.

Its mind was made up in "the seventies,"

Nor hath it ever since changed that concoction.

It works to represent that school of thought

Which brought the haircloth chair to such perfection,

Nor will the horrid threats of Bernard Shaw

Shake up the stagnant pool of its convictions;

Nay, should the deathless voice of all the world

Speak once again for its sole stimulation,

'Twould not move it one jot from left to right.

Come Beauty barefoot from the Cyclades,

She'd find a model for St. Anthony

In this thing's sure *decorum* and behavior.

THE AMERICAN: HIS FREEDOM

By H. L. Mencken

IT is one of the fixed faiths of the American that he is a sturdy and unfettered individualist, and that no sort of barrier, whether within or without, hinders the free play of his ego. He holds it as a truth almost self-evident that he has the maximum of political liberty attainable under civilization, and he commonly adds that he has the maximum of personal liberty, too. One of his favorite exercises in patriotism consists in comparing his lordly lot to that of the poor Englishman, borne down by armaments and rowelled by a haughty aristocracy; or to that of the poor German, burdened by taxes and barons no less, and by drill sergeants and the *polizei* to boot; or to that of the poor Russian, oppressed eternally by inexorable and incomprehensible tyrants; or to that of the Pole, Finn and Irishman, slaves in the lands of their fathers.

He is sincerely sorry for these unfortunate fellows, but a touch of contempt conditions his sympathy, for in the back of his mind there is always the feeling that their wrongs are due, at least in part, to their own supineness and lack of enterprise. He blames the Germans, for example, for their alleged sufferings at the hands of the police—sufferings which seem to him to be wholly incompatible with civilized freedom and national self-respect. The German he really esteems is that one who has cast off the hideous yoke—*i. e.*, that one who has sought escape from official despotism by coming to America. He regards the German who remains and bears it as a man of a distinctly inferior species, just as he regards the colonial loyalist as a man of an inferior species. He has no doubt whatever that this German is

forced into the army unwillingly and ordered about by the police in violation of his inalienable rights, and that his submission is proof of a congenital weakness of character; and he often puts this theory into the doctrine that the German army is made up of stupid and sullen automata, and that a few dozen regiments of American freemen could easily dispose of it.

This conceit of the American in his own unparalleled liberty goes back to the period of exuberance following the War of the Revolution, and has been the dominant note in all his political literature ever since. The European, when he lifts his voice in patriotic song, commonly testifies to his holy passion by promising some definite service, either to his country or to his king. He will guard the Rhine, he will die for the tricolor, he will pray to God for King George. His hymn doesn't boast an achievement; it voices an ideal and an aspiration. But the American, when he sings of his country, quickly drops into frank praise of himself. He doesn't say that he longs for freedom, that he approves of freedom, that he would die for freedom: he says that he *has* freedom, that he has wrested it bravely from fate, that he defies fate to take it away from him. His country, as he sees it, is not *a* land of the free, but *the* land of the free. And not only the land of the free, but the home of the brave, for most of his pride in his freedom is pride in his valor. He looks down upon all folk who bend the knee, whether to kings, nobles, bishops, drill sergeants or police, and he looks down upon them most of all when they seek to justify the bending intellectually. To him there is never any virtue in such

subservience, however lofty its ostensible aims. The philosophy he subscribes to is that of the successful and unrestricted act. He cannot give his approval to a philosophy which runs to restraints and inhibitions.

And yet, for all that glorious celebration of his unfettered state, and all that pitying disdain of those who do not share it, there is probably no civilized man who knows less of genuine liberty, either personal or political, than the American. He is the constant prey, not of one tyranny, but of an endless succession of tyrannies, some of them forced on him by the universal laws that govern human society, but more of them springing out of his own peculiar weaknesses, stupidities and traditional habits of mind. Morally, as we saw in July, he is hedged about by a vast and complex fabric of taboos, the visible symbol of his incurable puritanism: not only is he forbidden to do a host of things that are wholly innocuous in themselves, but he is even forbidden to object to the prohibitions. What is more, the number of such prohibitions is eternally increasing, so that it has become almost impossible for a citizen of the republic to get through a day without violating at least one of them. And this despotism in major morals is matched by a parallel and even worse despotism in minor morals. In every relation of life the private conduct of the American is minutely regulated. He is forbidden to dispose of his property as he pleases; he is forbidden to amuse himself as he pleases on his holidays; he is forbidden to read what books he pleases and to look at what pictures he pleases; he is even forbidden to dress, think, drink and die as he pleases.

Many of these restrictions, true enough, are founded upon a muddled conception of the public good: their aim would seem to be to protect the innocent bystander. But how does the bystander profit when the free citizen is forbidden to go fishing on Sunday, or to cut off his wife as Shakespeare cut off Ann Hathaway, or to get the reports of the Chicago and Philadelphia Vice Commissions through the mails, or to play poker in his own club, or to keep fighting cocks, or

to see the play of "The Easiest Way," or to kiss his girl in the parks, or (being female) to smoke in public, or to commit suicide? And yet all of these things, and a thousand other such acts with them, are forbidden in many American States, and some of them in all States, severally or by federal statute.

If all this piling up of laws made for the security and peace of the citizen—if it protected him more than it harassed him—there might be some excuse for it, as there is for the omnipresent *Verboten* sign in Germany. The German's freedom is invaded by that sign, but at the same time his rights are safeguarded. The same police who forbid him to do this or that also forbid anyone else to bother him. He must cease his harmonic caterwauling at 11 P. M.—but so must his neighbor in the flat above. He must not discharge his kitchen wench without just cause—but neither may she depart without just cause. He must obey all police regulations—but those regulations may not be changed without due and public notice, and the privilege of breaking them is not for sale. In brief, the German gets a valuable consideration for his surrender of small liberties: putting one thing with another, he makes a distinct gain by his bargain. But the American gets little if any profit, either in security of life and property or in mere freedom from annoyance, out of his inquisitorial and meticulous laws. What does it benefit him that his neighbor is forbidden to hear opera on Sunday afternoons, or to spread the secrets of race suicide, or to send a flask of whisky by parcels post, or to preach atheism from a soap box? These prohibitions, it must be obvious, burden the individual without conferring any appreciable advantage upon the mass, or even upon other individuals. They are merely evidences of a peculiarly American weakness, the wanton exercise of the police power for its own sake—and behind them lies another peculiarly American weakness, the failure of the police power when and where it is actually needed.

I will not bore you with a recital of the grosser proofs. You know as well as I

do that the homicide rate in the United States is vastly greater than that of any other civilized country, and that the accident rate on all public carriers is many times as great, and that the fire risk, in any average American city, is five times as high as in the average German, English or French city. If liberty means, first of all, the reasonable security of life and property, the right to go unmolested, the protection of equitable and efficient laws—if such is its primary meaning, then the American has little more of it than the Finn, the Spaniard and the Turk.

And not only in these large ways, but also in a multitude of small ways, his enormous body of laws fails to serve him. Why do such private organizations as the Consumers' League, the S. P. C. A., the Society Against Unnecessary Noises, the Society for the Suppression of Vice, the Travelers' Aid Society, the Legal Aid Society, and the various City Clubs and Good Government Leagues—why do such organizations flourish so amazingly in the United States? Simply because the American, if he would enjoy his common rights, must fight for them extra-legally. Simply because his government does not protect him. It is wholly unnecessary in Germany for housewives to meet in council and issue diplomas to honest grocers: the government sees to it that *all* grocers are honest, that a pound is a full pound of sixteen ounces, that fresh food is actually fresh. No specific complaint is necessary. The private citizen doesn't have to play the detective. All such things are watched and regulated as a matter of course: the regulation of them is regarded as a prime duty of government. And so, though perhaps less thoroughly, in England. Imagine a fleet of Thames tugboats keeping all Lambeth and Pimlico awake at night—not of necessity, but out of sheer deviltry! The Thames Authority would stop it at once. And yet the only way to stop the din in the Hudson was for private citizens to band themselves together, and besiege the newspapers with lamentations, and go for relief at last to the courts of equity. The statute law was inadequate to pro-

tect them in their common right to sleep at night, and its officers made no move to help them.

Into most such crusades in the United States, of course, there enters a good deal of the Puritan spirit—that is to say, the pious yearning to put sinners to the torture. The S. P. C. A., for example, commonly estimates its success, not by the number of horses it has saved, but by the number of drivers it has jailed. And the various breeds of vice crusaders, whether their specific target be drunkenness, gambling or prostitution, are obviously moved by what may be called a glorified sporting instinct. They are hunters before they are reformers, and differ from ordinary hunters only in the fact that they hunt men and women instead of lions and rabbits. But for all this, there is always an intelligible excuse at the bottom of their fine frenzy, and that is the excuse that the things they oppose are actually nuisances, and that the existence of such nuisances invades the rights of peaceful citizens. No sane householder, I take it, is pleased by the news that a brothel has been opened in the house next door or a faro game in the house opposite. However little these enterprises may outrage his pruderies, he is at least keenly conscious that they damage his property, and so he is against them. Here the law should aid him—and here the law almost invariably fails him. At best he must gather evidence at his own cost and risk, and with it break down the chronic indifference and incapacity of the police. At worst he must do battle with the police frankly against him—perhaps as the actual partners of the lawbreakers he is trying to dispose of. In brief, there is no automatic machinery for his relief and protection, no redress of his wrongs as a matter of course. What machinery there is must be started by his own effort, and too often the operation of it is beyond his strength. In all the countries of Europe, including even moral England, the business of prostitution, to take one example, is strictly regulated by the police. They determine the conditions under which prostitutes may practise the ancient art, and they take care that

those conditions are not violated, to the loss and annoyance of the people in general. It is only in the United States that prostitutes are *feræ naturæ*, and free to go wherever the neighbors are not powerful enough to exclude them. It is only in the United States that their proper regulation—one of the most difficult problems of city life—is left, in the main, to private enterprise.

Thus, on inspection, the advertised liberties of the American begin to shrink a bit. If liberty means, on its negative side, a freedom from vexatious molestation, it must be plain that he has a good deal less of it than he might have—and perhaps a good deal less than many Europeans. On the one hand, he is constantly molested in his private actions by petty and tyrannical laws, and on the other hand, he gets but feeble protection against the slings and arrows of unsocial neighbors and professional lawbreakers. Imagine the state of a man who is forbidden to go to hear an orchestral concert on Sunday afternoon, and forced to listen to the ragtime issuing from the automatic piano next door! Imagine this, and you have a pretty accurate image of the normal state of the American. I am speaking here, of course, of the average American, of the American in the average American town. In some of the large cities, as everyone knows, the picture must be changed a bit to be accurate. In these cities, for example—or, at all events, in a few of them—the Sunday laws are relatively liberal, and almost all amusements that are lawful on six days of the week are also lawful on the seventh. But this liberality in one direction is always counterbalanced by increased oppression in some other direction. The New Yorker may do many things on Sunday that are unlawful in Roanoke, Va., or even in Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore, but he has lost his constitutional right to bear arms, and his right of free speech is amazingly circumscribed by the police. So with the Chicagoan: he is under no obligation whatever to obey two-thirds of the moral statutes of his lawmakers, but if he were to go into one of the parks and argue that anarchy is reasonable or that

abortion should be permitted by law, or if he should put either argument into a pamphlet and circulate it on the streets, the police would quickly clap him into jail. Yet the Englishman has the one right and the German has the other, and both are exercised as a matter of course.

And this change of restrictions is accompanied, as one mounts the scale of American communities, by a slackening of protections. The only American towns that may be said to be well policed are those so small that they have no police. So long as the exercise of the police power is a private duty, charged upon the neighbors, it is accomplished with reasonable zeal, but the moment it is laid upon professionals, it becomes nobody's business and is neglected accordingly. Government by neighbors, of course, has many disadvantages: it makes for innumerable petty invasions of personal property. But it lacks the two great drawbacks of all the more complex forms of government in America: it is not inefficient and it is not corrupt. The small-town American, whatever his surrender of civilized rights, is at least protected in the enjoyment of those that he retains. He is not forced, for example, to live in direct contact with prostitution. He is not bludgeoned by one set of officials, and compelled to submit to outrage by the criminal partners of another set of officials. He is not habitually robbed under the forms of law, and knocked about, and turned loose among rogues. But that is the lot of the American living in an incorporated town, and year by year the American living in an incorporated town is coming to represent, more and more closely, the American average, the true *Homo Americanus*. His grandfather was a pioneer, whether of the prairies or of the immigrant ships, and his father was a farmer, but he himself is used to paved streets, and his son will die a cockney.

But what of this American's liberties on the positive side? What of his independence of thought, his passion for individualism? Does it really exist, or is it merely an illusion? Two-thirds of it, I am convinced, has no more reality than his thrift, and scarcely more than

his virtue. As a matter of fact, he is so little the soul-free individualist that it is almost impossible for him to imagine himself save as a member of a crowd. All of his thinking is done, and most of his acts are done, not as a free individual but as one of a muddled mass of individuals. When the impulse to function seizes him, he does not function and have done, but looks about him for others who yearn to function in the same way. In two words, he is a chronic joiner. He does not stand for something; he belongs to something. And whether that something be a political party, a trades union, a fraternal order or a church, it quickly reduces him to the condition of an automaton, so that in a short while his opinions and acts become nothing more than weak reflections of *its* opinions and acts. The result is visible in one of the most curious characteristics of the American: his extraordinary fealty to party. This fealty vastly transcends all intelligible theory and purpose. In the South, for example, a Democrat is a Democrat, not primarily because he approves the principles of the Democratic party, but simply because he is a Democrat. He puts the organization far above its aim; the name is more to him than the thing itself. He was a Democrat in 1892, when to be a Democrat meant to be in favor of the gold standard; he was a Democrat in 1896 and 1900, when it meant to be in favor of bimetallism; and he was still a Democrat in 1904, when it meant approval of the gold standard once more. And to match him there is the hide-bound Northern Republican, faithful to his party through a dozen changes of policy, and following leaders as unlike as ever were Gladstone and Disraeli.

This loyalty to party, and the relative permanence of party which goes with it, have been explained more than once on the ground that the two great political divisions in the United States represent the two great divisions of human thought. The Republican party, it is argued, is simply the Conservative party, the party jealous of settled ways, while the Democratic party is that of experiment and innovation. It is in some such way,

roughly speaking, that all men are divided, not only in America, but everywhere else. Every civilized nation has its Liberals and Tories, its advocates of change and its foes of change. But this theory quickly goes to pieces when it is applied to the facts of American political history. The most radical political innovation ever proposed in the United States, at least since Jackson's day, was put forward and carried through by the Republican party. This was the abandonment of the republic's traditional insularity and the acquirement of colonies overseas, held by the sword. And the most hunkorous clinging to old idols ever seen in our politics must go to the credit of the Democratic party—the party of experiment and progress. I allude, of course, to its extraordinary fidelity to the doctrines of State's rights—a doctrine under heavy fire from the very beginnings of the republic, and long since exploded by the necessities of national development. The whole history of the United States, indeed, is a history of successful attacks upon this doctrine. And yet the alleged party of progress solemnly reaffirms it every four years, and creates for it the mythical sanctity of a pious dogma, and seeks to make it appear as the supreme achievement of the fathers.

No; it is impossible to explain the American's devotion to party as a devotion to ideas. Now and then, when an extraordinary event (such as the revolt of Col. Roosevelt, for example) introduces faction into a party, it is suddenly revealed that radical differences have existed for years. And at other times, as in 1908, two great parties come so close together that it is well-nigh impossible to distinguish them. The difference between the means of the two parties in the year mentioned, as shown by the national platforms, was obviously less than the difference between the two main wings of the Republican party, as shown by the dramatic quarrel of 1912, and yet both wings remained faithful and voted as a unit, and the election was carried by a strict party vote. A split came, it is true, four years after, but to ascribe it to an antagonism of ideas is to

be rather too facile in explanations, for in the first place that antagonism had existed for a long period without causing a rupture, nor even any considerable desertion of forces, and in the second place the actual clash, when it came at last, revolved around personalities rather than around principles. Or, to be more accurate, it revolved around emotions rather than around ideas. On the one hand was loyalty to the party and on the other hand was enthusiasm for an heroic chieftain. These diverse emotions split the Republican party. They are the emotions which lie at the bottom of party organization and party fidelity in the United States. The American does not put ideas above party; he puts party above ideas. And after party he puts personalities; he is an incurable hero worshiper, an easy victim of gifted rabble rousers. If he has room for ideas at all, they go in third and last place. He sticks to his party long after it has repudiated all of his convictions. Witness the Democrats of the Southern sugar country, bawling for Cleveland and praying for protection. Witness, again, the failure of the Gold Democrat movement and the heavy vote for Bryan in 1896, despite the opposition to bimetalism among Eastern Democrats. Witness, yet again, the easy *volte-face* of the Democratic party in 1904.

But here I get into the trouble field of the party history, with its dubious records and conflicting testimonies, and had better turn back at once. The one point I want to make is that the boasted independence of the American vanishes into thin air at the very place where it would be most valuable if it really existed—to wit, at the polls. A democracy made up of assertive individualists, each reacting upon all the others, would be a democracy extremely jealous of human rights and extremely sensitive to new ideas. But the democracy actually flourishing in the United States is made up of two disorderly mobs, each wholly careless of the rights of the other, and of the rights, no less, of the individuals within its own ranks, and both highly resistant to purely intellectual suggestion. The chief mark of each is its extraordinary

development of the herding instinct, its childish subservience to professional mob masters, its ruthless crushing out of originality. There is no room in American politics for the man of acute and inventive mind: this and not the prevalence of corruption explains the political timidity of the vast majority of educated and intelligent Americans. The very fact that a man proposes something new or says something new is sufficient evidence against him: he is dismissed at once as a heretic, a mugwump, a traitor to all decent thinking. In the long run, of course, he may see his ideas adopted by the people, but only after they have been translated into terms of conventional sentimentality, either by his own voluntary stooping to the mob's level, or by the aid (usually unwelcome) of some expert appropriator and popularizer. I once heard William J. Bryan confess that his own *armamentarium* of ideas was made up entirely of burrowings. It is doubtful that a single one of the actual authors of these ideas ever attained to enough prominence to make him remembered, even by Mr. Bryan, or that any one of them would have recognized his contribution after Mr. Bryan had salted and sauced it to the public taste. They were mugwumps, one and all, and they paid the inevitable penalty of their mugwumpery.

But, as I have said, this distrust of new ideas in politics is by no means a loyalty to old ideas, at least in any intellectual sense. Nor is it, generally speaking, a loyalty to tradition, for only in the South is there an active tradition in politics, and even there it is dying. Nor is it, save in a small minority of cases, a selfish interest in a going concern, for not one American in a hundred makes any personal profit out of politics. What the American is actually loyal to is the mere party abstraction, the bald notion of order and discipline, the conception of undeviating, unintelligent direction—and after that, to great bravos, mighty chiefs, heaven-kissing heroes. In a word, his political thinking is not marked by independence, but by the very reverse: its essential quality is its doglike subservience. On the one hand

he avoids innovation as something accursed, and on the other hand he bends a limber knee to bosses of his own creation. His dominant passion is not for self-expression, but for self-effacement. He performs the functions of a citizen, not as a free ego, but as a mere cipher, a nameless soldier in a large army. The one sure way to shake his party loyalty is to convince him that his party candidates are doomed, that the other side will have a walkover. In such an event, it is not unusual for him to vote for the opposing candidates, on the ground that he doesn't want to "lose his vote." The thing he most esteems in his party is success. It pleases him to think that he is part of a powerful organization, and that he is led by the powerful chiefs of that organization.

Reformers commonly make the mistake of denouncing party rings as things apart from and antagonistic to party. That is to say, they picture the bosses as rogues who have imposed themselves, by dark and devious arts, upon the innocent rank and file, and their whole propaganda is an effort to awaken the rank and file to the deception. No wonder they always fail! The alleged deception, of course, is no deception at all. The bosses obtain and hold their power by the free consent of the rank and file, and that consent springs out of the American's ineradicable distrust of himself, his ready servility to loud and forthright men, his irresistible tendency to join a crowd. There is probably not a single sane voter in the United States who is under any illusion whatever as to the aims and methods of his party bosses: that they pursue politics as a trade, and for their personal advantage only, is universally known. And yet there is not a single community in the United States which lacks a boss chosen by the free suffrages of the party members, most of whom are honest men, as honesty goes, and get no recompense, direct or indirect, from the boss. No recompense, that is, save the satisfaction of their inherent impulse to serve, their chronic repugnance to independent action. These men, if they so desired, could overthrow the boss with ease. When their lust for

cruelty is properly inflamed and played upon by rhetoricians more skillful than the boss himself, they sometimes actually do it. But soon or late they always return to their vassalage. Soon or late they always return to the boss. And if not to the boss dethroned, then to some other boss. The whole Progressive movement in the United States is no more than wholesale change of bosses. The people are just as slavish to the new bosses as ever they were to the old bosses. In more than one State, indeed, the new bosses are merely the old bosses in new falsefaces.

This thirst of the American to be ruled, this ready acquiescence in the setting up of authority over him, is visible in nine-tenths of his daily acts, and casts a curious light upon his theoretical abhorrence of aristocracies. The fact is, of course, that human society would be impossible without aristocracies, and the American can no more emancipate himself from that organic necessity than the Russian, the Chinaman or the Englishman. Next to the craving for distinction, the most powerful psychic appetite in man is the impulse to admit and honor distinction. Within the ranks of a genuine aristocracy—*i. e.*, among the intelligent minority of any people—the distinction that is honored is commonly real enough. That is to say, it is based upon some valuable achievement, or upon the possession of some tangible dignity. But in a democracy the tendency is always to pay homage to the spurious and meretricious, and nowhere is this tendency more marked than in the United States. Men are estimated by the American according to a scale that is almost inverse to the scale of their intrinsic worth. If such a man as Tschaiikowsky or Darwin or Von Behring were to go to live in the average American community, he would be outranked in public eminence by the local political boss, by all the noisier preachers, by the principal fraternal order magnates, and by a great host of even lowlier mountebanks. His fame would be less, and his influence upon the communal life and thought would be less.

I once had an object lesson in an

American city of considerable size, the seat of a great university. One day, walking down the main street, I overtook the president of this university, a man of distinguished scientific attainments and international renown. As I dropped into step behind him, I noticed that the political boss of the city, an extremely gross and ignorant man, was ten paces ahead of him. Thus I followed the pair for three or four blocks. The boss got bows and cringing smiles from two score citizens, including a leading banker, a high public official and a clergyman within the shadow of a bishopric, and many others craned their necks to stare at him. But not a soul showed any sign of respect for the great scientist, and I doubt that half a dozen passers-by even recognized him.

The scientist was a man whose distinction resided in his personal merit, while the boss was a man whose distinction had no higher source than the doggish servility of the people. All through the United States the landscape is thick with such brummagem notables, and the people revere and follow them. A dozen tin-roofers meet in the back room of a saloon, organize a lodge and elect one of their number "grand worthy potentate." A year later they are "honored" by his presence at their meetings; in ten years he may be so eminent a magnate that they will travel miles for the privilege of shaking hands with him. All our bogus titles—"honorable," "colonel," "professor" and so on—are far more than empty names. They are the symbols, nine times out of ten, of a very real public position, though often that public position has no better basis than their gratuitous assumption. The American feels himself subtly honored by the acquaintance and notice of such magnificoes; he bows to them as willingly and as proudly as an Englishman bows to a baronet. Our whole repertoire of bogus titles, in truth, is proof

that the average American, like every other commonplace man, is born with an ineradicable propensity to submit himself to his betters. The men who put the prohibition of "titles and orders of nobility" into the Constitution were not genuine commoners, but aristocrats subtly jealous of one another, and perhaps eager to prove their intrinsic distinction by theatrically resigning all external distinction. The thing was not without precedents: certain Frenchmen had but lately shown the way, and the history of England was strewn with examples. But the common people of the United States did not acquiesce in that arrangement very long. There was never, indeed, any "Citizen" Washington; he was "General" from the start, and in the First Congress it was formally proposed that he be made "His Excellency" or "His Highness." The motion failed, but its underlying doctrine remained.

Today we have our enormous hierarchy of "excellencies" and "honorable," "generals" and "colonels," "judges" and "doctors." We have generals of the army, generals by brevet, generals of the militia, generals of the governors' staffs, generals of the Boys' Brigade, generals of the Knights Templar, the Hibernian Rifles, the Patriarchs Militant, the G. A. R., the Spanish War Veterans. A man who has once been attorney-general of his State remains a general to the end of his days. And all the lesser titles cling as stickily—"major," "captain," "professor," "marshal," "sheriff," "squire." This is not private vanity: it is public opinion. The American's one true exercise of the infinite freedom he boasts of is revealed in his creation of innumerable and complex aristocracies. He must have lords to look up to; he must have bosses to lead him; he must have heroes to admire. The one guide he distrusts eternally is his own unfettered spirit.



IN even the men they love, women never entirely forgive age or poverty.

FOR SALE

By Albert Payson Terhune

IT was one of Raegan's stories. He told it to me to illustrate the point of an argument.

Most of Raegan's stories illustrate a point. Often a choice of points; which are like ferryboats, in that if you miss one you can nearly always catch the next—such as it is—with nothing lost but time.

Raegan, as I have explained elsewhere, had been a little of everything: from racetrack tout to settlement worker; from strong-arm toiler to cabaret impresario. Every calling of his had begotten anecdote. I have a reluctant feeling that a few of his anecdotes may really have been true. Perhaps the following was one of these. Possibly not.

It was during one of New York's semi-periodic moral spasms. A feature of the epidemic was a one o'clock cabaret closing ordinance. Raegan, as night manager of the basement Poultry Show Tango Conservatory, sneeringly and wittily defied the one o'clock closing ordinance. Until twelve fifty-nine. Then he closed the place with all the languorous leisure of a machine gun in action; and, slamming the door behind the rearmost and protestingmost of his guests, he dismissed his "Tango Team," his "Mysterious Masked Contralto" and the rest of the dreary performers, and sat down limply at a wall table to wait while the report of the evening's intake was counted and the greasy floor washed down.

Raegan beguiled the time with talk. His own. The sole brand for which he cared. I listened, with a sort of modified patience, while he computed widely the amount of money that must nightly travel all the way to Harlem and Brooklyn, instead of remaining in Manhattan's

tropico-central zone; because a band of thrice blest reformers chose to forbid the turkeys to trot or the chickens to tango after one A.M.

I ventured the inspired opinion that the ruling would prove a gold mine for the cabarets; and that the Mayor, through the papers, was their press agent—since there is no advertisement like the forbidden, and as "Thou shalt not" is New Yorkese for "Come all ye."

I thought my theory good. I still think so. Raegan did not. And he set out to prove it. Here, in brief, is his richly embroidered proof:

New York (declared Raegan) likes the forbidden, just as much as Mrs. Eve and Auntie Potiphar and everyone else always did and does and will. But there are enough folks in New York to keep up the bars around anything in the "thou shalt not" line and to scare away the average timid plunger.

How about cabarets, for instance? The Mayor says, "One A.M." The cops say it after him. And what happens? Why, one A.M. it is. And that's all there's to it. Folks are forbidden to stay later. And they have to mind. It's the same in every bypath from the straight and narrow. There're fifty volunteer regulators here to scare such trespasser back into the rut again. When I see how many amateur plain clothes guardians every New York law has, it's a miracle to me how any lad has nerve enough to break through 'em all for his first beer and cigarette; or any girl for her first pair of silk stockings.

A whole lot of perfectly willing and earnest little would-be sinners have been choked off at the post that way. Sin's no

cinch, whatever the copybooks say. It's hard to put across. F'r instance—there was Florida Quaide. A sad, sad case was Florrie's. Sad enough to get into a tract. If ever anyone learns the knack of writing tracts with the reverse English.

Florrie didn't come from any half-portion burg, like most "typ'cal New York girls." She was a rarity. A real freak. Born here. *Born* in New York. Honest. Some are, you know. Only you never get to hear of it—any more than you hear of the trusted clerk who cops the boss's coin and doesn't get caught.

Over in Greenwich Village she was born. Over in the cubist region where West Fourth Street crosses West Tenth, and Waverley Place runs at right angles to itself. Heaven help the jag carrier who tried to find his home in that district!

The Quaides were pretty nicely fixed—for New York. They could gener'lly get the rent paid before the thirtieth, and they were near enough even with the game to change butchers when the meat began to get too tough. You know the sort of people. High av'rage—for honest folks.

They kept an eye on Florrie from the day when she had her five-year-old birthday party and "held out" in a kissing game until the boy gave her three marbles and half the candy he'd pinched off the supper table. From that festal hour, pa and ma sure watched little Florida. They had a hunch it wouldn't do her marrying chances any harm.

She was a girl whose looks a man can't hope to describe till he's drunker than I'll ever have the time or the money or the concentration to be. Tall, deep-chested, with shoulders that were music. Norse goddess kind—with a splash of Madonna. Peaches and cream skin, eyes like a thunderstorm on the Mediterranean and hair like spun sugar. Color of hair indigenous, too. And features whose team work would make a star Yale eleven look like a draft of green Polack section hands. I told you I couldn't describe her. Neither I can. Nor you, nor anyone in his senses. And men who knew her had a way of getting rid of their senses first of all—as excess luggage.

It's enough to tell you she had half the

professional beauties backed off the board for sheer looks. And she had ginger and "go" and enough cleverness not to be clever. And she had the style that makes clothes look as if you'd bought 'em at the right place.

Add to all that the asset that she wanted to be rich and hadn't a heart to her back and that she loved Florida Quaide with a love that was stronger than death—and you have the layout.

Most likely you think that you can see the finish, too. Well, son, if horses ran true to form there wouldn't be a race-track left open on earth at the end of one week. And if women did the same—people would keep right on living, but mighty few of 'em would ever kill each other or marry or have heroines in their novels.

But, before the draw, Florida's looks and character gave her parents a permanent cure for the sleeping sickness, and set 'em to envying the folks of old; who used to be able to lock their daughters in harems and castles and such joints, till the right man happened along. And they brought Florrie up as careful as an Elsie book girl and never once took her off the leash.

Then, when she was about nineteen, they didn't do a thing but perish—pa and ma both within a week of each other—from sampling the old oaken bucket at a back-to-nature resort where surface drainage was considered too trifling and new fangled to bother about.

Florrie was the only child. And that wound up her home life. It left her with about a thousand dollars. That meant time to turn around. It left her free. And that meant the *chance* to turn around. She had all her moral ideals in her parents' names. And that meant the *intention* to turn around; now that the collar was slipped. She went to stay at her great-aunt's for a month while she took her bearings.

Now don't get me wrong. Florrie wasn't vicious. She didn't assay one ounce of vice or wickedness to the ton. She was just a good business man. If she'd been born a member of the downtrodden sex she'd have made the corkingest salesman that ever sold a fleet of deep sea canoes

to a Sahara sheik. She'd have outbargained all Hester Street. She'd have been a captain of industry while any other beginner was learning the rudiments of bookkeeping.

Being a girl—and one of the gorgeouset—she sized up her assets, arranged the show window and laid out her advertising campaign. In those days her orbit and mine couldn't have come within seventy-three million miles of crossing. But when they *did* cross at last, and I got the story from her, in misses' size sections, here's something the way I gather she had doped out the situation at the start:

"I'm nearly twenty. If I had any more education and polish I'd have to label it 'Not wanted on voyage' and check it in the hold. I've a figure that makes men look at me one way and women another. My face needn't take back talk from Lillian Russell or Maxine Elliott or any of 'em. I'm roasting myself good and plenty when I just say I'm a winner. I have all the goods.

"Now, what comes next? There's a lot of lines open to me. I can get an office job or a position as companion, or I can go on the stage. Any of these will keep me from starving. With my looks and my sense I can most likely marry some man with a pay envelope of from thirty to sixty dollars a week.

"Is any of that good enough? For the average girl, yes. And the average girl can't always get it. For me? No. I might almost as well own a gold mine and build a candy store on top of it, instead of digging.

"Multimillionaires, outside of novels and Pittsburgh, don't marry Bertha the Beautiful Sewing-Machine Girl. At the same time, if Bertha is wise, they don't leave her sewing in the snow with a white face and a black shawl.

"They leave her on Easy Street. And that's going to be my future address. Easy Street. In the easiest house, with the easiest number. Not to be confounded by the near-sighted with the Easiest Way. And by the time men forget to look at me a second time I'll be so rich they'll look at me through my bank-book."

That was the layout. Get the idea? No vice. No foolishness. Straight *business*. You read about hundreds of such cases. But only three women in America and only two in England, in this generation, have ever done it successfully in real life. Why are there so few? Because of those same "thou shalt not" rules.

Florrie Quaide was still looking for the right start when the right start came looking for her. Her folks had been well thought of. And when it was known that Florrie was left alone there were two or three offers to help.

Gail Viner was pretty big in Wall Street just then. Old man Quaide had given him his start. So, when he heard of Quaide's death, he dropped around to see if he could be of use. A cheque for a hundred, or a letter of introduction or something like that, for his old benefactor's orphaned girl.

But when he sets eyes on Orphaned Girl, in her close black dress and the shimmery, indigenous hair and the eyes like purple sea storms, he throws up both hands and promises her a cinch secretariat job in his own private office at twenty per. Florrie accepted it and had sense enough not to feel grateful. That girl knew pretty near as much as a collie.

By the time she'd been working for Viner & Co. a week, it was lunch every day with the boss, and roses on her desk, and other safe leads. Then came the follow-up. And Florrie met it as calm as if it had been a suggestion to order *sole marguery* instead of *homards savarins*. She just said:

"Certainly. You'll make a settlement on me first, though. And you will arrange that the house I'm to live in is to be in my own name."

This rattled Viner. He'd looked for a capture by storm instead of a "basket parties welcome" sign. But he was wild about her, all right. And he went off his head. He reneged on the plan he'd framed up, and he asked her to marry him instead. Some men do, you know. She said:

"No. Why should I? I've been in your office long enough to see how the business is run. You're pyramiding coin

on a bear market. But you've no reserve capital or credit. The smash is liable to come any time. It's certain to come some day. When it does, it will leave your skin tacked on the barn door. And it'll leave your wife with the need to hock or sell something, to give you a new start. I'd rather accept the Proposition than the Proposal, thanks. It'll leave me on the warm side of Easy Street when the blizzard hits.

She didn't get a show to accept either offer. For the next day the bulls got loose in the Street; and, after forty-eight hours of snarling fight, Mr. Gail Viner was wiped out.

Florrie said bye-bye to him, real gentle and sympathetic. And she cleaned out her desk and went home—as good as when she came into Wall Street, and richer by only a luncheon or two and a few twenty-dollar-a-dozen roses.

Before she'd got her hat and coat off, young Mark Carlsen called to see her. He was a cousin of Viner's, and he'd met her twice at Viner & Co.'s office. His mother was rich and he worked only as a bluff to keep the old lady from shutting down on his forty-eight-thousand-dollar yearly allowance. All the money was mamma's, you see, and she wanted friend son to keep busy. Carlsen didn't waste a lot of time when he found Viner had gone to the wall. He came right to the point. Florrie had heard all about his finances from Viner. And he looked good to her.

He took her to dinner that evening. And while they ate she told him her terms. He winked a little, to clear his mind. Then he agreed, being young enough not to want to marry her.

An old lady with a mountain of white hair—some of it all her own—crossed the dining room and sat down at their table. It was mamma. She was with some friends in the same restaurant, and had cruised alongside to see what sonny had carried aboard the lugger.

"Introduce this lady to me, Mark," she said.

Sonny shifted about in his seat, like he'd sat inadvertent on a progressive wasp. He read in books that a man was a cad to let That Sort of Woman meet

his mother. He didn't know just what a cad was. But he hated to be one. So he squirmed some more. Mamma fixed them both with an eye that some ancestor of hers had rented from a fish. And she purred, freezing sweet:

"I am old-fashioned. Perhaps I should have said, 'Introduce *me* to this lady.' Can you do that any easier, Mark?"

Marky makes sounds like a handful of pebbles in a vichy siphon. Mamma gets up and says:

"There is an extra seat at our table, Mark. An extra seat. Come."

Say, don't get to sneering too hard at sonny for trotting across at mamma's heels and leaving Florrie to get home any way she can. He knew the dear old soul. And he knew if he balked at doing anything she said, it would be a case of "Where's my allowance?" With no answer. Next morning, mamma started Marky for Mexico to mismanage some of her mining interests down there.

Poor little Florrie! Still as good as gold. And with no strong chance to get gold for her goodness.

She managed in a week or so to connect with a job in old Cyrus Q. Spillaker's office. But the first day she was there, Cyrus's wife potters in and takes a shine at her and has her at the house and all that. And Cyrus is so touched by foxy wife's sweet womanly trustfulness that he tells Florrie she'd better go get a job somewhere else; because if she don't his wife'll never consent to lose sight of her for a day.

That about wound up the office end of Florrie's campaign. And she tried a new tack.

In those days there was a little music hall in New York that wasn't like any other music hall anywhere. It was only about twice as big as a hall bedroom, and it was jammed to the ceiling every night. Some of the crowd came to see the dandiest bunch of comedians that had ever been lured into one cage. But most were there because the show-girls were the prettiest on record. That place in its day was a mint to many a hard-working stage girl who had the right sort of ambition—and strangled it.

Florrie had heard about the place. She had the looks, as few of them had, even in that cream pitcher of canned beauty. She could dance a bit. And her singing and acting weren't good enough to hurt her prospects, or to mar the general effect from the other side of the footlights. So she got a job there. At twenty-five a week—plus.

It looked like plus, with clear sailing. At the first performance, when she waltzed on in the front row of the *Chaufeuirettes'* Chorus, she got a gurgle and a grunt through ninety curved noses that meant more than a dozen curtain calls. Each nose stood for ready money. In bulk.

Florrie had gotten into the chorus game more quickly than the average beginner. Not only because of her looks, but because of the Stage Damager. No, no, son. He wasn't the kind you think. McCool was fat and old and homely, with a voice like a cross-cut saw and a temper like Red Wrath. And he regarded his girls as machines. He drilled 'em and got results from 'em as no one else could. And he stormed at 'em as no one else would. But as for thinking of 'em as human beings—why, each of 'em, in McCool's eyes, was just a cog in the music hall's wheels. Nothing more.

Well, 'way down in his heart, old McCool had one soft spot. Twenty-five years before he had been in love. The girl had jilted him. But she'd done it so nicely that he had always remembered her as a sort of saint and he had worshipped her as such. She had happened to be Florida Quaide's mother.

"Happened." Yes. Things *do* "happen" once in a while; outside of fiction. And it was because he had known her mother that Florrie struck McCool for the job.

From the minute McCool set eyes on Florrie, he took her right under his wing—for her mother's sake. He rehearsed her in private, and he worked over her ten times as hard and one-tenth as blasphemously as over the others. He had her half trained in no time, and had every other girl in the chorus so mad she couldn't see. Then, just be-

fore Florrie's debut, McCool spoke to all and sundry, as follows:

"This kid is a friend of mine. I knew her folks. They were the right sort. So's she. She's here to earn honest bread. She looks on this as a stage, not as an auction block, like the rest. I know, because I knew her folks; like I was telling you."

Then he glowers around at everybody from callboy to manager; and he goes on, speaking out of one corner of his mouth:

"The first doorman or usher that slips her a mash note from any of that regatta of noses out front is going to get his face pushed in and then he's going to get fired. The first human bankroll that dares stop her at the stage door is due to get his map all devastated by an old guy named Con McCool. I'll see her home every night. And the missus will bring her here every night. And she'll board with *us*. And the result will be one straight girl in this company. Any arguments?"

There weren't any. McCool was too valuable to the manager. He was the mainspring of the show.

And Florrie Quaide, standing back in the wings while this speech was fired off—was she not a grateful young woman? Ah, yes, fair sir, she was. Pretty near as grateful as the cat is when you lift her down from the back fence and put her into the cellar for the night.

Florrie stood it two weeks. Nobody inside the house dared buck up against McCool. In the alley, he or his crabbed old frau was always riding herd on her; with a face that sent the Johnnies screeching up a tree. No one outside the show knew where she lived. She was a torrid frost.

Once—only once—a note got through to her. The callboy brought it. She didn't know he'd been fired that day and was taking a chance of a licking just to get back at McCool. Florrie palmed the note and read it in her bedroom. She was certain she'd struck a live wire at last. Because she figured out that the sender must be a Cræsus to have been able to afford a tip that

would outweigh the callboy's fear of McCool.

It was a nice modest note. It begged her to "accept the enclosed verses that her loveliness had inspired" and to meet the writer at Sherry's next day for luncheon. The verses were kind of silly. But when a poem is made up about you, personally, it seems a lot finer than when it's written about anyone else. (At least I s'pose so. The only poem anybody ever made up about *me* was a limerick, once. And I chased the gifted author half a block, with a bungstarter.)

These verses the guy wrote about Florrie began something like this; as well as I can remember. She had kept 'em, and she showed 'em to me when she told me the story:

'Twas on a morning such as this
(All gold and fire-blue)
When just to be alive is bliss,
That God made *you!*

From bournes where dancing day stars play,
In shimm'ring Paradise,
He took the laughter of the Day
To fill your eyes.

And a lot more stanzas telling where and how an otherwise discerning Providence had managed to assemble the different parts of her face. Florrie might have been set wise by the poetry. It wasn't quite rank enough to have been writ by a plutocrat. Or even by a plutocrat's secretary. And it wasn't good enough for him to have bought from some regular union poet. But she was anxious, by this time, to believe anything. So off she sneaked, next noon, to Sherry's. And there she met him.

He was a soph'more at Columbia. And he'd staked his whole month's allowance for the luncheon and a bush league bunch of violets that he said matched her eyes. Florrie went home in tears. Next day she left the music hall.

Oh, yes. She had other chances, after that, of course. A girl with her face and figure has 'em by the parcel. One was a fatherly man who met her on the street and whose offer resolved itself into a thirty-dollar-a-month flat in the Bronx.

Another was a broker's clerk who "pledged her the jewels of Ind" (though I never heard of any but literary jewels hailing from Indiana), and wound up with a flat proposition that made Florrie slap his face and walk out of the tea-room like a pair of compasses.

A third was a Brooklyn man whose ideas of guilty splendor were a half-carat diamond, a six-dollar dinner and dress circle seats at the Opera.

A fourth really had a little money—not much, but some; and asked her to marry him. But his wife objected, and he quit.

McCool hunted out and beat up a wealthy brunette who had tracked Florrie from the music hall. And a heavy tragedy father who was a politician threatened her with jail if she got her hooks in his near-human son who was an inartistic but willing spender.

A couple of honest, manly young fellows took pity on her girlish innocence and warned her against a Pittsburgh money eater who sighed for her love. And by threats of telling another woman about it they chased him into the waving grain.

And so on and so on. Everywhere the "thou shalt not" slogan kept her straight. Everywhere she was protected. When it wasn't McCool or some other hated defender of virtue, it was a father or a wife or a case of somebody's conscience working overtime to shoo her away from a profitable exchange.

Florrie wasn't fool enough to go into the retail end of the business; where small profits and quick returns make a toboggan race look like a snail walking backward, and where the last step is into the river or the clinic. There was no money in that. And money was all Florrie wanted. Good money. Big money. Not vice with its world-old wageless wages.

A long line of dead failures taught her a bit of extra sense. She spread the net more carefully. And she had her reward. In its meshes she rolled just the breed of man she wanted. A theatrical manager with a truckload of yellow fibre paper and a string of theaters. That meant a competence

and a star career. It spelt a whole Future for her.

She was always cautious. And he was easy. So when she said: "Wait till after my first appearance in this 'forty-thousand-dollar production' you've promised me," he agreed to wait. And he hurried along with the production. Florrie had a gorgeous hand-made part written into a new musical comedy for her. Everything was going gorgeously.

Then what do you suppose happened? The most probable, improbable, dead certain, impossible thing in the world.

Florrie fell in love. After the first rehearsal. With the lyric builder of the show. A hack writer who drew down seventy a week for pinning song words onto wabbling librettos for the manager who was planning and hustling to be Florida Quaide's brevet bridegroom.

The lyricsmith's name was Deming. The minute he and Florrie set eyes on each other at rehearsal it was a double case for the goo-goo wagon. Deming knew he'd met his fate. And he said so to everybody who'd listen.

As for Florrie—well, you remember what I told you about horses and women running true to form? That was it. Florrie Quaide had fallen in love with somebody besides Florrie Quaide. And, like measles that waits till you're past thirty, it threw a ravage into that girl. And it showed her she had a soul.

First of all, she began to hate herself for what she'd been trying so long to do. She felt holy when she was near Deming. And she felt like a mental leper, too. It was a big mix-up of thrills. And out of it all popped just one fact: she was in love. Horribly in love; all over and all through.

When Deming asked her to marry him she told him the whole thing. He forgave her and said it was fate that had kept her pure and good for him.

But she wasn't satisfied even yet. When a woman's sorry, she tries to atone. When a man's sorry he tries to forget. That's why men *sometimes* win the sex war. Florrie went to the manager and told him it was all off. And she explained very kindly what a beast he was to try to buy a girl that way.

The big-hearted manager reparteed by telling both Florrie and Deming to get out of his theater.

They did. They went out hand in hand. They hailed a taxi and told the meter-illiterate to drive them at record speed to the City Hall license bureau. Deming promised the man extra fare for extra haste.

An alderman down there performed the "two-and-two-make-one" sum for them. And hubby varied his honeymoon by borrowing enough cash to go on with and by still-hunting for another job.

That was some years ago. I lived under them for a while in a Harlem home-cannery. They lived on the fifth floor. Only because there was no sixth. There's where I got the story; one night when Florrie was sitting on the stairs making a new guess every seven seconds as to why Deming didn't seem to remember where he lived. I tried to console her a bit. And when she found I used to know McCool, she warmed up to me and sawed off a yard or two of her experiences.

I saw her again last week. Once she might have been another Evelyn Thaw. She *is*—well, what she is. Is she unhappy? Son, is a hunting dog that's broken a leg unhappy? Not so's you could observe. He finds out it's nice and warm behind the stove or in the sun. And he gets fat and wheezy and contented, and loses his memory of hunting days—except maybe when he's asleep.

No, Florrie's pretty happy, I guess—for her. Her figure's lost, of course. Or, rather, not lost, but gone before. And cooking in an airtight kitchen, and night patrol work with squeaking babies, and making the pay envelope do elastic skin stunts haven't helped her looks so much as they might. But she's an expert egg shirrer; and at tub work and ironing she hasn't her peer north of One Hundred and Forty-eighth Street.

Denny's pretty true to her. He's generally too broke not to be.

She sews all her own clothes, too. And, after all, a seamstress is easier to live with than a siren. Unless one has to.

THE DOTAGE OF DUNS SCOTUS

By Donn Byrne

DUNS SCOTUS came to his school,
And, fumbling at the latch,
He caught from a roystering blade
The troll of a soldier's catch.

A ballad of women and wine,
Of war and the whirring of swords,
And the heart of him went out
To the call of the merry words.

And he marked how the long sword clanked
Against the warrior's hip.
And he followed to hear the catch
Of winecup and maiden's lip.

And he marked the laughing of girls
To the laugh in the soldier's eye.
And he marked how the cheeks of them flushed
At the sight of sword on thigh.

He said: "My scholars are sitting
Within on their well worn bench,
When a fighting man would be drinking
In a wine house with a wench.

"And where is the wisdom of sitting
With pencil and paper and tome,
When the wandering minstrel is gayer
Than the Holy Father at Rome?"

Duns Scotus came to his school,
And his heart was broken in two
At the thought of the soldier's song
And the youth he never knew.



"Is this a second hand shop?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I want one for my watch."

THE SUBMERGED THING

By Harris Merton Lyon

THERE is a sort of bachelor who walks up and down in the earth and makes life even more than usually painful for married men. The married man of the gentle sort must perforce hold his peace before him; there is no possible retort to be made without loss of caste. And because there can be no answer direct to this imbecile, let this story be written.

It was told to me by my friend James Sheldon Phipps. You can at once surmise, from the three-barreled name, that he is both American and inclined to the profession of letters. Which is correct. A man about fifty, fine in every particular, a devotee of the better things which culture lays before us on a silver platter. Phipps is the proprietor and editor of a comprehensive little magazine, in green binding, dedicated to "all the arts." During his latter years he has spent most of his time—for, enormous to admit, his magazine yields him an independent income—on the Other Side of the Water, which is where Paris and London are. But in his younger days he was very fond of New York. It was there he almost sacrificed his bachelorhood.

Even in the period of his vigor there may have been something of the visionary about him, as you shall tell for yourself. Certainly today he has a superfine vagueness of mind. Give him an after-luncheon cigar and a subject such as the Art of Writing Fairy Tales and I defy you to understand one thing he says within an hour's talk. But I think you will understand this:

"There are at least forty ways for a bachelor to make an ass of himself"—he

said—"and at least thirty-nine of these offer themselves when he is around married people. In my salary days, when my judgment was green, I used to move among a very Nice Set. I changed my clothes three times a day and cultivated the Right Sort. I even wore, or bore, a monocle when I felt like it, and was very witty and wrote reviews of music and sculpture and painting and Russian novels for the intransigent publications of that heyday. Well, I used to see my sort of people all the time, everywhere. I was considered something of a philosopher, in a worldly yet esthetic way, and was listened to with respect. Among my most respectful listeners were the Borden Johnstons. Of course that's not their real name.

"Johnston himself was a clean, healthy chap about thirty-five—five years older than I happened to be at that time. He was wealthy. Money had been left to him—from pins, ordinary New England pins, the kind that come out of a factory, the kind of which great newspapers, bulwarks of public opinion, ask: What becomes of all of them? He was a quiet man with a facile, well trained mind and a good sound sense of humor—not obstreperous humor, of course; rather quizzical and philosophical. Everybody knew him to be strong, clean, good-humored, level-headed, sweet-tempered. He had a dignity about him, too. If ever a man radiated kindness, he did. If you brought up the name of a person, he was kind in whatever remark he made about that personality. If you brought up an abstract argument, he spoke kindly of even the abstract—which, in my opinion, it is not at all necessary to do. He had the kind of bringing up we

all would like to have: he knew the real mining men in Mexico, the real cowmen out West, the real painters in Paris, the real writers in London. All that sort of thing. He had the faculty of attracting and holding the sterling qualities of men wherever he met them. Among women he was equally fortunate.

"His wife, Bianca, seemed to be a mighty good pal of his. At the time I first knew them I thought I had never seen a couple so fond of each other. She was so—well, 'jolly' seems to be the word. But then she had other qualities when the occasion arose. She could be ardent at the proper time—and she was so *wifely*! They went at life in a chummy fashion which was good for a bachelor like me to see. I was more at home with the Borden Johnstons than with any of the rest of my friends. In fact, I dined there whenever they invited me—which was almost every other night. I was on an intimate basis with them, very intimate.

"That's what made it so shocking to me when I—when he—well, let me tell you.

"Bianca was one of those sparkling, mouse-faced, olive-skinned women who are a sort of cross between an Ibsen heroine and a corking outdoor tomboy. Borden's men friends were her friends, almost on the same footing. Not quite that way, of course. Half of them fell in love with her. I fell deeply in love with her.

"Platonic, you know. All open and aboveboard. It really seemed more like frank admiration.

"Here is where comes in the confession of the Asinine Bachelor. *I used to rave to Borden about his wife.* I used to say: 'If only I could get a woman like the one you got, Bordie, I'd make the plunge.' I have since learned that this is one of the most excruciating agonies a married man, unless he be bordering on the realm of fatuous lunacy, has to bear. It is so excruciating because there is no alternative; he must simply sit quiet while the encomiums come thudding down. It allows no more loophole of escape than the old question: Do you still beat your children?

"At first Bordie took it from me as I've no doubt he had taken it from scores of others in a more or less diluted fashion. Nobody, not even the women, ever had anything to say *against* Bianca. The only consideration was how strongly the praise could be, or should be, put. Bordie used to smile quizzically at me in silence whenever I spoke glowingly of that imbecile conditional—'if I could find another like Bianca—'

"After a while, though, he began questioning me more closely. 'Just what is it in Bianca you admire most?'

"'Oh,' I would say largely, 'she's such an all-round woman.'

"'I know. But—'

"'She's so wifely, so sort of maternal'—though they had no children, she rather seemed to mother Bordie—'so efficient around the house; and yet she has time for all of us rank outsiders with our theories of art and our fads and our nonsense.'

"Then, while he would sit there slightly interested, slightly bored, I would plunge in fervently: 'You know, it's rather bold of me to say this—'

"'Oh, by no means. Please go on.'

"'But most women have their limitations; and jolly obvious they are. You can spot them right off generally. Certainly after you've known them rather close up, you know, you are bound to get an insight into what's lacking. There's always something lacking—'

"'In all of us,' he would interpose.

"'Just so. But in not quite all of us. Once in a while we find an all-round perfect sort. I think your wife is that sort, since you've asked me. I wish there were more. Charm, interest, efficiency, tact—you probably do not realize the pearl you've got, old man.'

"This sort of silliness would put him on his guard. 'Oh, yes, I do. How else do you think I came to get her?' he would say and smile at me.

"How often, often since those days have I heard the inane outsider say just that: 'You don't realize the pearl you've got, old man!'

"Sometimes after these hardy, utterly foolish, ardent spurts of mine he would say gently:

"Bianca is fond of you, too. She says"—he would smile—"doubtless because you are so cognizant of her good qualities, that you are very sensible."

"This used to send a glow through me. In a purely platonic way I had been about a good bit to galleries and concerts with her. I could feel my affection increasing, but in what I considered a perfectly legitimate way—and, anyhow, I could not have prevented it if I had wanted to. She was altogether adorable, a genuine woman of the best kind ever, without a drawback.

"And I still think so—that is, when I can think as I thought then.

"Really it is amazing, but this confidential admiration went on for four years. I grew fonder and fonder of Bianca Johnston; and I grew fonder and fonder of Borden Johnston. On occasion I made the statement that I wished I could find another Bianca. Failing that, I clung pretty close to the original.

"Then this happened:

"One night I was at the club very late. It must have been after one. I had been in a little side room writing a review of a new opera; the thing had to go down to the printer that night. I stepped out with the envelope in my hand, intending to call a boy, when I plumped into Borden. He seemed rather pale and upset and tense and distracted.

"Hello!" I said. "What are you doing here this time of night?"

"Oh, nothing. What are you doing?"

"I was just going to send this off, get a brandy and soda and go to bed."

"This seemed to make up his mind. 'Come in here,' he said, drawing me back into the little side room. 'We can have the drinks in here and you can send your note out by the waiter. I want to talk to you.'

"It isn't a note. It's some copy for the printer."

"Anyway, come in here."

"He seemed to drink his long drink with gusto. His face was working, slightly, into wry little folds of muscle about the mouth. Otherwise he was just as kind and gentle and sane as ever. Yet at that hour of the night and under those conditions the whole thing seemed

as insane as could be. Somebody has said that none of us is sane after midnight, and I am inclined to believe him. Borden looked at me a long time, then down at his glass, which he rubbed between his hands.

"You are very fond of Bianca, aren't you?" he began. 'You have time and again said to me that you would be happy if only you had a wife like Bianca. Well, you can have her.'

"I stared at him foolishly.

"I am going to drop quietly out of sight, Jimmy. I think I shall go to South America. I promise you I shall disappear for the requisite number of years to make me legally dead. I am never coming back. I am going to leave her fairly well off, but not too well off.' He began repeating monotonously: 'I shall drop out of sight without any noise, and shall probably go to South America and put my money into some business there. But I'll change my name and I'll never come back. I'll be legally dead and—if you care—mind you, this is more for Bianca's sake—sort of protection for her and all that—you'll probably find—well, at any rate, I shall be out of the way.'

"What the devil farce is this?" I burst out.

"Don't be silly," he said. 'Do I seem to you the sort of man to indulge in farces of this particular sort?'

"He did not. 'But—but why?' I stammered.

"He hit the table a terrific smash. His face was literally on fire. 'Jimmy, the woman's impossible!' he said, through clenched teeth. After he had said that, and in that manner, he lapsed back into his old demeanor.

"But—what's the matter?' I insisted. 'Have you quarreled? Are you jealous?'

"Now, Jimmy, don't be silly."

"You come to me with an extraordinary proposal that I should assume Bianca's protectorship. For goodness' sake, is it I?'

"He laughed easily. 'Don't be silly.'

"Has she done anything—different, that is?'

"No."

"Look here, Bordie, I feel like a sort of father confessor in this affair. I feel years older. Maybe if you tell me your side and she tells me hers—"

"I am five years older than you and I have been married seven years," he said conclusively.

"I began to take Bianca's part.

"She's a good woman, isn't she?" I started.

"Yes."

"She has beauty, charm, tact—all those things?"

"Yes."

"I thought I would put a poser. 'Does she love you?'"

"Probably," was his astonishing answer.

"Then *why* do you suggest this crazy idea?"

"He looked at me steadily again, and all he would say was: 'She is impossible.'"

"Finally, after a long and fruitless talk, we separated.

"At four o'clock next day I received a telegram from him. It read: 'Am off to South America.'"

"I knew him too well to conjecture that there might be something theatrical about all this. There was really no doubt that Borden Johnston had sailed for a new life under a new name and would never come back. I reflected superficially that he would probably like Buenos Ayres better than New York, and that he would doubtless spend his springs in Paris. But—I suppose it is shameful and—and weak to confess this—underneath it all lay the thought: *You can have her!*"

"I felt half mad myself. Here was the intricate puzzle of Borden's going away coupled in my mind with the thought that, once he was declared legally dead, Bianca *could* be mine if she would. And in this frame of mind I went, as I had done for four long years, to call upon Bianca at five o'clock.

"She received me, of course, just as if nothing had happened, rang for tea and settled herself down to her usual chummy understanding. I was a bit flustered. But she was as smiling and delightful as ever. For a while I was stupid enough

to imagine she had no news; but after a bit she skimmed easily over it.

"Bordie has taken a sudden notion to run away after some business in San Francisco," she said. When she put it that way, I played my part.

"Yes. He wired me briefly he was leaving."

"Then the extraordinary thing occurred, the thing which has made me hold my tongue—even though I *am* a bachelor—in the presence of all connubiality. It is only in little flashes that most of us get a glimpse into things other than those which concern our bread and butter. And these flashes are almost always due to superheated unconventionality. All I have been telling you has been strangely unconventional, but I fancy that if everything had stayed conventional I would have—well, I would have gone on being blind to this one especial thing all the rest of my life.

"Bianca was dressed in gray that afternoon; she never was more charming. With the shades pulled down part-way, the cigarettes going, the chat beginning to verge on the serious-jocular—well, I never felt more at home with anyone in my life.

"And then—"

"Just as her face was taking on a new animation from some description—obviously humorous—which she was giving, I saw another face, red, the muscles working into rolls around the mouth, the eyes staring imperturbably at me, a ghostly fist rise and fall with a silent smash in the air between me and Bianca; and a curt voice said in my inner ear: 'She is impossible.'"

"Why was she impossible?"

"What was this vivacious creature holding back? What was in that brain, lurking behind those obvious, attitudinizing expressions, those grimaces of humor? What had Bianca, the real Bianca, back of the superficialities? What did Borden know that I did not know? What did he mean when he said in his gentle, almost recluse-like fashion—as if dismissing the subject as beyond discussion: 'She is impossible'? I had known this woman for four years and had almost adored her; I thought I knew

every thought she had. I had considered her as near perfection as we are likely to come. Yet I had judged as an outsider. He had been her husband. And he had said she was 'impossible.'

"I gazed steadily at her working lips. Slowly his features faded from in between.

"She burst out laughing at the end of her narrative. 'And don't you think I did exactly right?' she chuckled.

"I know an introspective glaze must have been over my eyes, and that there was no responsive life there to meet her own. I said, 'Certainly,' and tried to chuckle, too. But it must have been a failure, for she sobered her voice, and speaking seriously about something—I've forgotten what—managed to hold my attention a while.

"Then my mind began to drift again. I said to myself: 'What is this submerged thing which the outsider cannot know? What sort of free masonry is there between two married beings which holds some inviolable secret from the world—which lets a man know that his wife is "impossible," which lets a woman know that her husband is "impossible," when to all the rest of the world the person is an agreeable paragon perhaps? Underneath all this behavior, these company postures, underneath all these words and words and words, how can the outsider know the truth?"

"Oh, say something," Bianca exclaimed.

"What shall I say?" I asked, in a daze, while my mind ran on to think how there are millions around about us fools, all of them knowing the inscrutable secrets—and we mouthing along a lot of open commonplaces! 'You can have her—she is impossible.' *Why* was she impossible? She was adorable. Why was she impossible?

"Possibly if I had not been such a visionary and had made the plunge I should have known. As it was, she said:

"You have been an awful block-head today."

"I left with some sort of promise to be brighter another time.

"But I called only twice after that. It got so queer, you know. Every time her mousey smile came, I could see his face in that little side room at the club. I could hear the soundless detonation of his fist. I could hear his sincere, crisp speech back in my head: 'She is impossible.' And I kept wondering to myself, like a ninny, what Bordie knew that I didn't know. And I kept wondering about what all the millions of those who are married know in their silent way."

"All question marks," I said. "Did she ever remarry?"

"Oh, yes. When she was 'free'—the word is mine, not hers—she married a chap who had lived twelve years in Paris. He had known her only a week. But he professed to be an expert in souls."



"WHAT wakened him?"
"His dollar watch stopped ticking."



IN any business no woman could ever be a silent partner.

RULES FOR AMERICAN DRAMATISTS

By George Jean Nathan

RULE 1. Political play: Problem must be solved through actions of daughter of District Attorney incidental to her love affair.

Rule 2. Detective play: Murdered man must always be discovered in library; detective must wear Alpine hat or checked cap, never derby; detective must indicate his profession to audience by keeping cigar or pipe constantly in or adjacent to mouth (no detective ever smokes a cigarette); and at end of last act detective must always be going to marry girl who appeared, pale and nervous, in Act I in white dress.

Rule 3. All Englishmen must wear top hats on back of head, must carry canes (which they must at least three times during action of play place behind them and lean on with legs placed wide apart), and must further indicate nationality to audience by periodic ejaculation either of "I say" or "Beastly weatha'." Furthermore, an Englishman must always carry pair of gloves in right hand and draw them on *in sight of audience*.

Rule 4. Society characters must always indicate social position by indulging frequently in epigrams. Male society character must be careful to convey social position to audience by carrying gold cigarette case; elderly female society character, by carrying lorgnette.

Rule 5. Mrs. Fiske must always be written role which, at some point in play, permits her tremulously to narrate her "past" to leading man; Billie Burke one that permits her coquettishly to rebuff rich suitor; Helen Ware one that permits her, at climax of Act II, to fall on knees, sob loudly and pound violently on door out of which her angry lover has just slammed his way; Mrs. Leslie Carter one that permits her either to deceive or to have deceived husband. Nazimova must always be a bad woman; John Drew always en route to or from his brother's sheep ranch in Australia; and David Warfield's heart must be constantly breaking.

Rule 6. All "crook plays" must contain at least one reference to Burns detectives.

Rule 7. A "smart" atmosphere is obtained by (a) periodic service of tea, by (b) causing the *ménage* to refer to butler never by his first name (John, Ignatz or Louie), but always by last name (Jenkins, Thompson or Pitt), and by (c) an amber-shaded lamp on grand piano.

Rule 8. All college boys wear turned-up trousers, smoke bulldog pipes, refer to father as "the governor," are impolite to sisters and keep hands, on all occasions, in pockets.

Rule 9. Military play: One in which current war has been brought about through rivalry of two men for hand of same girl.

Rule 10. Table: An article of furniture on which persons lean. Leading male character must never sit in chair but always on arm. Bedroom: Place where a lady hides. All plays laid in England should have big scenes occur in the drawing room; all plays laid in United States in a business office or a library; all French plays in her boudoir; and all German plays in the dining room.

Rule 11. All Germans are comedians.

THE NIGHT ROMANCE OF EUROPE: VIENNA

By Willard Huntington Wright

This is the first of a series of articles dealing with the night romance of the capitals of Europe. The idea of these articles is to body forth the spirit of gaiety and youth as it manifests itself in the temperamental appeals of the different nations. The series is the first of its kind ever written, and is intended neither as a guide to the night life of the European cities nor as a criticism of the people's forms of amusement. The November article will deal with the night life of Berlin.

THE casual Sunday school superintendent, bursting with visions of luxurious gaieties, his brain incited by references to *Wiener blut*, his corpuscles tripping to the strains of some Viennese *schlagermusik*, will suffer only disappointment as he sallies forth on his first night in Vienna. He is gorgeously caparisoned with clean linen, talcumed, exuding Jockey Club, prepared for surgical and psychic shock, his legs drilled hollow to admit of precious fluids, his pockets bulging with kronen. He is a lovely, mellow creature, a virtuoso of the domestic virtues when home, but now, at large in Europe, he craves excitement. His timid soul is bent on participating in the deviltries for which Vienna is famous. His blood is thumping through his arteries in three-four time. His mind is inflamed by such strophes as "*Es giebt nur a Kaiserstadt; es giebt nur a Wien*" and "*Immer luste, fesch und munter, und der Wiener geht nit unter.*" But he is brought gradually to the realization that something is amiss. Can it be that the vice crusaders have been at work? Have the militant moralists and the professional women hunters, in their heated yearnings to flay the transgressor, fallen foul of Vienna?

He expected to find a city which would be one roseate and romantic revel, given over to joys of the flesh, to wine-drinking and confetti-throwing, overrun with hus-

sies, gone mad with lascivious waltzes, reeking with Babylonish amours. He dreamed of Vienna as one continual debauch, one never-ceasing saturnalia, an eternal tournament of perfumed hilarities. His lewd dreams of the "gayest city in Europe" have produced in him a marked hallucinosis with visions of Neronic orgies, magnificently prodigal—deliriums of chromatic disorder.

But as he walks down the Kärntnerstrasse, encircles the Ring and stands with bulging inquisitive eyes on the corner of the Wiedner Hauptstrasse and Karlsplatz, he wonders what can be the matter. Where, indeed, is that prodigality of flowers and spangled satin he has heard so much about? Where are those super-orchestras sweating over the scores of seductive waltzes? Where the silken ankles and the glittering eyes, the kisses and the flutes, the beery laughter and the delirious leg shaking? The excesses of merrymaking are nowhere discoverable. Des Moines, Iowa, or Camden, New Jersey, would present quite as festive a spectacle, he thinks, as he gazes up at the sepulchral shadows on the gigantic Opernhaus before him. He cannot understand the nocturnal solitude of the streets. There is actual desolation about him. A chlorotic girl, her cheeks unskillfully painted, brushes up to him with a care-

less "*Geh Rudl, gib ma a Spreitzn.*" But that might happen in Cleveland, Ohio—and Cleveland is not famed as a modern Tyre. He is puzzled and distressed. He feels like a Heliogabalus on a desert isle. He consults his watch. It is past midnight. He has searched for hours. No famous thoroughfare has escaped him. He has reconnoitered diligently and thoroughly, as only a pious tourist bent on forbidden pleasures knows how. He is the arch-type of American traveler: the God-fearing deacon on the loose; the vestryman returning from Jerusalem. Hopefully, yet fearfully, he has pushed his search. He has traversed the Kärntnerring, the Kolowratring, peered into Stadt Park, hit the Stubenring, scouted Franz Josefs Kai, searched the Rotenturmstrasse, zigzagged over to the Schottenring, followed the Franz, Burg and Opern-Rings, and is back on the Karlsplatz, still virtuous, still sober!

Not a hour! Nary a carnival. No strain of the "Blaue Donau" has wooed his ear. No one has nailed him with sachet eggs. He has not been choked by quarts of confetti. His conscience is as pure as the brews of Munich. He is still in a beneficent state of primeval and exquisite prophylaxis, of benign chemical purity, of protean moral asep-sis. He came prepared for deluges of wine and concerted onslaughts from ineffable *freimaderln*. But he might as well have attended a drama by Charles Rann Kennedy for all the rakish romance he has unearthed. His evening has gone. His legs are weary. And nothing has happened to astound or flabbergast him, to send him sprawling with Cheyne-Stokes breathing. In all his promenading he has seen nothing to affect his vasomotor centers or to produce Argyll-Robertson pupils.

Can it be true, he wonders, that, after all, Viennese gaiety is an illusion, a base fabrication? Is the *Wiener blut*, like fowan blood, calm and sluggish? Is Vienna's reputation bogus, a snare for tourists, a delusion for the unsophisticated? Where is that far-renowned *gemüthlichkeit*? Has an American press agent had his foul hand in the advertising of Austria's capital? Perhaps—per-

haps! . . . But what of those Viennese operas? What of those sensuous waltzes, those lubric bits of *schramm-musik* which have come from Vienna? And has he not seen pictures of Viennese women—angels *à la mode*, miracles of beauty, Loreleis *de luxe*? Even Baedeker, the papa of the traveling school-marms, has admitted Vienna to be a bit frivolous.

A puzzle, to be sure. A problem for a Copernicus—a paradox, a theorem with many decimal points. So thinks the tourist, retiring to his hotel. And figuring thus, he falls to sleep, enveloped in a caressing miasma of almost unearthly respectability.

But is it true that Vienna is the home of purity, of early retirers, of phlegmatic and virtuous souls? Are its gaieties mere febrile imaginings of liquorish dreamers? Is it, after all, the Los Angeles of Europe? Or, despite its appearances, is it truly the gayest city in the world, redolent of romance, bristling with intrigue, polluted with perfume? It is. And, furthermore, it is far gayer than its reputation; for all has never been told. Gaiety in Vienna is an end, not a means. It is born in the blood of the people. The carnival spirit reigns. There are almost no restrictions, no engines of repression. Alongside the real Viennese night life, the blatant and spectacular caprices of Paris are so much tinsel. The life on the Friedrichstrasse, the brightest and most active street in Europe, becomes tawdry when compared with the secret glories of the Kärntnerring. In the one instance we have gaiety on parade, in strumpet garb—the simulacrum of sin—gaiety dramatized. In the other instance, it is an ineradicable factor of the city's life.

To appreciate these differences, one must understand the temperamental appeals of the Viennese. With them gaiety comes under the same physiological category as chilblains, hunger and fatigue. It is accepted as one of the natural and necessary adjuncts of life like eating and sleeping and lovemaking. It is an item in their pharmacopœia. They do not make a business of pleasure

any more than the Englishman makes a business of walking, or the American of drinking Peruna, or the German of beerbibbing. For this reason, pleasure in Vienna is not elaborate and external. It is a private, intimate thing in which every citizen participates according to his standing and his pocketbook. The Austrians do not commercialize their pleasure in the hope of wheedling dollars from American pockets. Such is not their nature. And so the slumming traveler, lusting for obscure and fascinating debaucheries, finds little in Vienna to attract him.

Vienna is perhaps the one city in the world which maintains a consistent attitude of genuine indifference toward the outsider, which resents the intrusion of snoopers from these pallid States, which deliberately makes it difficult for foreign Florizels to find diversion. The liveliest places in Vienna present the gloomiest exteriors. The official guides maintain a cloistered silence regarding those addresses at which Viennese society disports itself when the ledgers are closed and the courts have adjourned. The Viennese, resenting the intrusion of outsiders upon his midnight romances, holds out no encouragement for globe-trotting Don Juans. He refuses to be inspected and criticized by the inquisitive sensation hunters of other nations. Money will not tempt him to commercialize his gaiety and regulate it to meet the morbid demands of the interloper. Hence the external aspect of sobriety. Hence the veneer of piety. Hence the sepulchral silence of the midnight thoroughfares. Hence the silence and the desolation which meet the roaming tourist.

In this respect Vienna is different from any other large city in Europe. The joys of Parisian night life are as artificial as cosmetics. They are organized and executed by technicians subtly schooled in the psychology of the Puritan mind. To the American, all forms of pleasure are excesses, to be indulged in only at rare intervals; and Paris supplies him with the opportunities. Berlin, and even Munich, makes a business of gaiety. St. Petersburg, patterning after Paris,

excites the visitor with visions of gaudy glory; and London, outwardly chaste, maintains a series of supper clubs which in the dishonesty of their subterranean pleasures surpass in downright immorality any city in Europe. Budapest is a miniature Babylon burning incense by night which assails the visitor's nostrils and sends him into delirious ecstasies. San Francisco and New York are both equipped with opportunities for all-night indulgences. In not one of these cities does the sight seeker or the joy hunter find difficulty in sampling the syrups of sin. Mysterious guides assail him on the street corners, pouring libidinous tales into his furry ears, tempting him with descriptions like Suetonius's account of the Roman circuses. Automobiles with megaphones and placards summon him from the street corners. Electric signs—debauches of writhing color—intoxicate his mind and point the way to haunts of Caracalla.

But Vienna! He will search in vain for a key to the night life. By bribery he may wring an admission or obtain an address from the hotel clerk; but the ménage to which he is directed is, alas, not what he seeks. He may plead with cabmen or buy the honor of taxicab drivers, but little information will he obtain. For these gentlemen, strange as it may seem, are almost as ignorant of the gaiety of Vienna as he himself. And at last, in the early morning, after ineffectual searching, after hours of assiduous nosing, he ends up at some *kaffeehaus* near the Schillerplatz, partakes of a chaste ice with *Wiener gebäck* and goes dolorously home—a virgin of circumstance, an unwilling and despondent Parsifal, a lofty and exquisite creature through lack of opportunity, the chaste victim of a killjoy conspiracy. He is that most tragic figure—an enforced pietist, a thwarted voluptuary. *Eheu! Eheu! Dies faustus!*

In order to come into intimate touch with the night life of Vienna one must live there and become a part of it. It is not for spectators and it is not public. It involves every family in the city. It is inextricably woven into the home life.

It is elaborate because it is genuine, because it is not looked upon as a mere outlet for the repressions of puritanism. From an Anglo-Saxon point of view Vienna is perhaps the most degenerate city in the world. But degeneracy is geographical; morals are temperamental. This is why the Viennese resents intrusion and spying. His night life involves the national spirit. His gaiety is not a prerogative of the *demi-monde*, but the usufruct of all classes. Joy is not exclusive or solitary with the Viennese. He is not ashamed of his frolics and hilarities. He does not take his pleasures hypocritically after the manner of the Occidental moralist. He is a gay bird, a sybarite, a modern Lucullus, a Baron Chevril—and admits it.

To be sure, there is in Vienna a miniature night life not unlike that of the other European capitals, but it requires constant attention and assiduous coddling to keep it alive. The better class Viennese will have none of it. It is a by-product of the underworld and is no more characteristic of Vienna than the gilded *cafés chantants* which cluster round the Place Pigalle on Montmartre are characteristic of Paris. These places correspond to the Palais de Danse and the Admirals Palast in Berlin; to the Villa Villa and the Astor Club in London; to Reisenweber's in New York; to L'Abbaye and the Monica in Paris—allowing of course for the temperamental influences (and legal restrictions) of the different nations.

Let us arouse a snoring cabman and make the rounds. Why not? All merry-making is shot through with youth, no matter how dolorous the joy or how expensive the indulgence. So let us partake of the feast before us. Our first encounter is with the Tabarin, in the Annagasse, an establishment not unlike the Bal Tabarin in Paris. We hesitate at the entrance, but being assured by the doorkeeper, garbed like Louis Seize, that it is "*ein äusserst feines und modernes nachtabelissement*" we enter, partake of a bottle of champagne (thirty kronen—New York prices) and pass out and on to Le Chapeau Rouge, where we buy more champagne. From there we go

to the Rauhensteingasse and enter Maxim's, brazenly heralded as the Montmartre of Vienna. Then on to the Wallfischgasse to mingle with the confused visitors of the Trocadero, where we are urged to have supper. But time is fleeting. The cabmeter is going round like a tortured turbine. So we hasten out and seek the Wiehburggasse, where we discover a "*Palais de Danse*"—seductive phrase, suggestive of ancient orgies. But we cannot tarry—in spite of Mimi Lobner (Ah, lovely lady!) who sings to us "*Liebliche Kleine Dingerchen*" from "*Kino-Königin*," and makes us buy her a peach *bowle* in payment. One more place and we are ready for the resort in the Prater, the Coney Island of Vienna. This last place has no name. Its existence is emblazoned across the blue skies by an electric sign reading "*Etablissement Parisien*." It is in the Schellinggasse and justifies itself by the possession of a very fine orchestra whose *militär-kapellmeister* knows naught but inebriate *tanz-musik*.

Again in the open air, headed for the Kaisergarten, we reflect on our evening's search for *nachvergnügungen*. With the lone exception of our half-hour with Mimi, it has been a sad chase. All the places (with the possible exception of the Trocadero) have been cheaply imitative of Paris, with the usual appurtenances of arduous waiters, gorgeously dressed women dancing on red velvet carpets, fortissimo orchestras, expensive wines, *blumenmädls*, hothouse strawberries and other accessories of manufactured pleasure. But compared with Paris these places have been second rate. The *damen* (I except thee, lovely Mimi!) have not inflamed us either with their beauty or with manifestations of their *esprit gaulois*. For the most part they have been stodgy women with voluminous bosoms, Eiffel towers of bought hair—bison with astonishing hyperboles and parabolas, dressed in all of the voluptuous splendor but possessing none of the grace of the Rue de la Paix. Furthermore, these establishments have lacked the deportmental abandon which saves their prototypes in Paris from down-

right banality. All of their devilries have been muted, as if the guests suffered from a pathological fear of pleasure. Strangers we were when we entered. As strangers we take our departure.

Why do I linger thus, you ask, over these hothouse caperings? For the same reason that we are now going to inspect the Kaisergarten. Because this phase of life represents an unnatural development in the Viennese mode of pleasure, something grafted, yet something characteristic of the impressionability of the Viennese mind. The Viennese are a hybrid and imitative people. They have annexed characteristics distinctly French. In the Kaisergarten these characteristics are more evident than elsewhere. Here is a people's playground in which all manner of amusements are thrown together, from the *balhaus*, where nothing but expensive champagne is sold, to the scenic railway, on which one may ride for fifty heller. This park presents a bizarre and chaotic mingling of outdoor concerts, variety theaters, *bierkabarets*, moving picture halls, promenades and sideshow attractions of the Atlantic City type. The Kaisergarten is the rendezvous of the bourgeoisie, the heaven of *hoi polloi*—rotund merchants with walrus mustachios, dapper young clerks with flowing ties, high-chokered soldiers, their boots polished into ebony mirrors, fat-jowled maidens in rainbow garb. . . . There is lovemaking under the linden trees, beer drinking on the midway, *schnitzel* eating in the restaurants. Homely pleasantries are thrown from heavy German youths to the promenading *mädchen*. One catches such greetings and whisperings as "*Du bist oba heut' fesch g'scholnt*" and "*Ko do net so lang umananderbandln*." There exists a spirit of buoyant and genuine fellowship. But here again it is a private and personal brand of gaiety. Let the obvious stranger whisper "*Schatz'rl*" to a powdered Fritzl on the bench next to him, and he will be ignored for his impertinence. The same salutation from a Viennese will call forth a coquettish "*Raubersbua*." Even the *Amerikan-bar* in the center of the Kaisergarten

(in charge of no less a celebrity than Herr Pohnstingl!) will not offer the tourist the hospitality he hopes to find. He will find neither Americans nor American drinks. The cocktail—that boon to all refined palates, when mixed with artistry and true poetic feeling—circulates *incognito* at Herr Pohnstingl's. Such febrifuges as masquerade under that name are barely recognizable by authentic connoisseurs, by Rabelaises of sensitive esophagi, by true lovers of subtly concocted gin and vermouth and bitters. But the Viennese, soggy with acid beer, his throat astringentized by strong coffee, knows not the difference. And so the *Amerikan-bar* flourishes.

It was here that I discovered Gabrielle, a sad little French girl, alone and forsaken in the midst of merriment, drinking Dubonnet and dreaming of the Boulevard Montparnasse. I bought her another Dubonnet—what stranger would have done less? In her was epitomized the sadness of the stranger in Vienna. Lured by lavish tales of gaiety, she had left Paris to seek an unsavory fortune in the love marts of Vienna. But her dream had been broken. She was lonely as only a Parisian can be stranded in an alien country. She knew scarcely a score of German words, in fact no language but her own. Her youth and coquetry did not avail. She was an outsider, a deserted onlooker. She spoke tenderly of the Café du Dome, of Fouquet's, the Café d'Harcourt, Marigny's and the Luxembourg. She inquired sentimentally about the Bal Bullier. She was pretty, after the anæmic French type of beauty, with pink cheeks, pale blue eyes and hair the color of wet straw. She had the slender, shapely feet of the French cocotte. Her stockings were of thin pink silk. Her slender, soft fingers were without a ring. Her jewelry, no doubt, had long since gone to the money lender. She seemed childishly happy because I sat and talked to her. Poor little Gabrielle! Her tragedy was one of genuine bereavement, or perhaps the worst of all tragedies—loneliness. I shall never think again of Vienna without picturing that stranded girl, sipping her Dubonnet

in the *Amerikan-bar* in the Kaisergarten. But her case is typical. The Viennese are not hospitable to strangers. They are an intimate, self-sufficient people.

Let us turn, however, from the little Gabrielle to a more fascinating and exquisite creature, to a happier and more buoyant denizen of Viennese night life! to a lady of more stately proportions, more elegant attire. In short, behold *Fräulein Bianca Weise*. In her are the alkaloids of gaiety. She irradiates the joyfulness of her city. In her infancy she was hummed to sleep with snatches from the "*Wiener Blut*," the booziest waltz in all Christendom. Bianca is tall and catlike, but deliciously proportioned. Her hair is an alloy of bronze and gold. Her skin is pale, and in her cheeks there is the barest bit of rose, like a flame seen through ivory. Her eyes are large, and their blue is almost primary. Her face is a perfect oval. Her lips are full and abnormally red. Her slender, conical hands are always active like those of a child, and she wears but little jewelry. Her gowns come from Paquin's and seem almost a part of her body.

This is Bianca, the most beautiful woman in all Europe. Do I seem to rave? Then let me answer that perhaps you have not seen Bianca. And to see her is to be her slave, her press agent. It was Bianca's picture that went emblazoning over two continents a few years ago as the supreme type of modern feminine beauty, according to the physiological experts and the connoisseurs of pulchritude. But it is not because of the lady's gift of beauty that I feature her here. It is because she so perfectly typifies the romance of that whirling city, so accurately embodies the spirit of Vienna's darkened hours. In the afternoon you will find her on the *Kärntnerstrasse* with her black-haired little maid. At five o'clock she goes for *kaffeetsch'rl* to Herr Reidl's *Café de l'Europe*, in the *Stefansplatz*. With her are always two or three Beau Brummels chatting incessantly about music and art, wooing her suavely with magnificent technique, drinking coffee inter-

mittently, and lavishly tipping the *kellner*.

These *kaffeehäuser* are the leading public institutions of Vienna. They take the place of private teas, culture clubs, dramatic readings and sewing circles in other countries. All Vienna society turns out in the afternoon to partake of *melange*, *kaffee mit schlagobers*, *kapuziner*, *schwarzen*, *weckerln* and *kaisersemeln*. But no hard drinks, no vulgar pretzels and wursts. Only Americans order beer and cognac at the coffee houses, and generally, after once sampling them, they follow the bibulous lead of the Viennese. Each *kaffeehaus* has its own coterie, its own habitués. Thus, at the *Café de l'Europe* one finds the worldly set, the young bloods with artistic leanings. The *Café de l'Opéra*, in the *Opernring*, is patronized by the advocates and legal attachés. At the *Café Scheidl*, in the *Wallfischgasse*, foregather the governmental coterie, the army officers and burgomasters. The merchants discuss their affairs at the *Café Schwarzenberg*, in the *Kärntnerring*. At the *Café Heinrichshof*, in the *Opernring*, one finds the leading actors and musicians immersed in the small talk of their craft. Thus it goes. In all the leading *cafés*—the *Habsburg*, *Landtmann*, *Mokesch*, *Gartenbau*, *Siller*, *Prückl*—the tables are filled, and the coffee drinking, the *baunzerln* eating and the gossiping go on till opera time.

The theater in Vienna is a part of the life. It is not indulged in as a mere amusement or diversion, like shooting the chutes or going to church. It is an evening's obligation. This accounts for the large number of Vienna theaters and for their architectural beauty. But do not think that when you have attended a dozen such places as the *Hofopertheater*, the *Hofburgtheater*, the *Deutsches Volkstheater* and the *Carltheater* you have sensed the entire theatrical appeal of Vienna. Far from it. No city in the world is punctuated with so large a number of semi-private intimate theaters and cabarets as Vienna—theaters with a seating capacity of forty or fifty. You may know the *Kleine Bühne* and the *Max und Moritz* and the

Holle, but there are fifty others, and every night finds them crowded.

Theatergoing is occasionally varied with lesser and more primitive pastimes. Go out on the crooked Sieveringerstrasse and behold the multitudes waxing mellow over the sweet red *heuriger*. Go to the Volksgarten-Café Restaurant any summer night after seven, pay sixty heller, and see the crowds gathered to hear the military band concerts; or seek the halls in winter and join the audiences who come to wallow in the florid polyphonies of the *Wiener Tonkünstler Orchester*. Sundays and holiday nights go to Grinsing and Nussdorf and watch the people at play. Make the rounds of the wine houses—the Rathaus Keller, the Nieder-Oesterreichisches Winzerhaus, the Tommasoni—and behold the spooning and the rough joking.

All this is part of the night life of Vienna. But it is not the life in which Bianca participates. Therefore we cannot tarry in the wine houses or at the concerts. Instead let us attend the opera. We go early before the sun has set. The curtain rises at six-thirty to permit of our leaving by half past ten, for there is much to do before the morning. After the performance—dinner! The Viennese are adepts in the gustatory art. Their meals have the heft of German victualty combined with the delicacies and imaginative qualities of French cooking. An ideal and seductive combination! A rich and toothsome blending! . . . Bianca touches my arm and says we must make haste. This evening I am to be honored with dinner in her apartment. So we drive to her rooms on the Franzenring overlooking the Volksgarten.

The Viennese dinner hour is eleven, and this is why the tourist, fingering his guide book, looks in vain for the diners. Sacher's, the Imperial, the Bristol and the Spatenbräu are deserted in the early evenings. Even after the Opera these restaurants present little of the life found in the Paris, Berlin or London restaurants. The Viennese is not a public diner; and here again we find an explanation for the tourist's impressions. When the Viennese goes to dinner, he

does so privately. Bianca's dinner that night was typical. There were twelve at table. There was music by a semi-professional pianist. The service was perfect—it was more like a dinner in a *cabinet particulier* at a Parisian café than one in a private apartment. But here we catch the spirit of Vienna, the transforming of what the other cities do publicly into the intimacies of the home.

At one o'clock, the meal finished, the intimate theater claimed us. There the glorious Bianca met her lovers, her little following. At these theaters everyone knows everyone else. It is the social lure as well as the theatrical appeal that brings the people there. Bianca chats with the actors, flirts with the admiring Lotharios and drinks champagne. At her side sit the greatest artists and dramatists of the day, princes and other celebrities. At one of these performances I saw her bewitching two men—one a composer, the other a writer—whose names lead the artistic activities of Southern Europe. But Bianca is prodigal with her charms, and before the final curtain was dropped she had shed her fascinations on every patron in the theater. And I, whose thirty kronen had passed her by the satin-pantalooned and lace-bosomed doorkeeper, was quite forgot. But such is Viennese etiquette. An escort may pay the *fiacre* charge and the entrance fee, but such a meager claim does not suffice to obtain a lady's entire attention for the evening. Such selfishness is not understood by the Viennese.

The real business of the evening came later. The coffee drinking, the theater and the dining had been so many preliminaries for that form of amusement which forms the basis of all Viennese night life—dancing. The Viennese dance more than any people in the world. During *Faschingszeit* there are at least fifty large public balls every night. These balls become gay at one o'clock and last through the entire night. For the most part they are masked, and range from the low to the high, from those where the entrance fee is but two kronen to the elaborate ones whose

demand is thirty kronen. Every night in Vienna during the season fifty thousand people are dancing. Nor are these balls the suave and conventional dances of less frank nations. By the mere presentation of a flower anyone may dance with anyone else. In every phase of night life in Vienna flowers play an important part. They constitute the language of the carnival. To such an extent is this true that, though you may ask for a dance by presenting a flower, you may not ask verbally, though your tongue is polished and your soul ablaze with poetry. And while you are dancing you may not talk to your partner. She is yours for that dance—but she is yours in silence. Should you meet her the following afternoon in the Prater or on parade in the Kärntnerstrasse, her eyes will look past you, for the night has gone, carrying with it its memories and its intoxications.

It is this spirit of evanescence, this youthful buoyancy, snatched out of the passing years, lived for a moment and then forgot, which constitutes the genuine gaiety of Vienna. It is an unconscious gaiety, sensed but not analyzed, in the very soul of the people. It keeps the Viennese young and makes him resent, intuitively, the invasion of other nations to whom gaiety is artificial. That is why the dances are open to all, why the formality of introductions would be scoffed at. Their blood has all been tapped from the same fountain head. There are affinities between all Viennese phagocytes. The basis of all romance is ephemeral in its nature, and in no people in the world do we find so great an element of transitoriness in pleasure-taking as in the Viennese.

A description of one of the masked balls would tell you the whole of the night life in Vienna, but until you have become a part of one of them you would not understand them. Not until you yourself had accompanied the fair Bianca and watched her for a whole evening, could you appreciate how these dances differ from those of other cities. Externally they would appear the same. Photographed, they would look like any other carnival ball. But there are things

which a photographic plate could never catch, and the spirit of merriment which runs through these dances is one. If you care to see them, go to the Blumensäle or to the Wimberger. The crowds here are typical. However, if you care for a more lavish or elaborate gathering, you will find it at the Musikvereinsäle or the Sofiensäle. These latter two are more fashionable, though no one remains at any one of the *maskenbälle* the whole evening. The dancers go from one ball to another; and should you, at five in the morning, return to a *balhaus* where you had been earlier in the evening, you would find an entirely new set of dancers.

Let us then take our departure, with the masked ball still in full progress, our hearts still thumping to the measures of an intoxicating waltz, the golden confetti still glistening in our hair, perfumed powder on our clothes, the murmuring of clandestine whispers still in our ears, the rhythm of swaying girls still in our blood. As we pass out into the bleak street, the first faint flush of dawn is in the east. The *wässerer* are washing off the cabs; a helmeted *hauptmann* salutes lazily as we pass, and we drive home full of the intoxications of that pagan gaiety which the Viennese, more than any other people, have preserved in all its innocence, its sensuous splendor, its spontaneity and youth.

Bianca? By now she has forgotten with whom she came to the dance. Next week my name will be but one of her innumerable memories—if, indeed, it does not altogether pass away. For Bianca is Vienna, lavish and joyous and buoyant—and forgetful. I danced with her three times, but my three roses, along with scores of others, have long since been lost in the swirl of the evening.

I wish I might think only of Bianca as the shadows dissolve from the streets and the gray morning light strikes the great steeple of Stefans-Dom. But another picture presents itself. I see a little French girl, out of touch with all the merriment around her, sipping her Dubonnet in solitude—a forlorn girl with pink cheeks, pale blue eyes and hair the color of wet straw.

HAGAR DECIDES

By Daniel Carson Goodman

"I WANT to speak to that little black-haired girl. How does one go about it?"

Professor Fielding spoke to the man across the table, but without looking at him, tentatively, as if he were ashamed of his remark.

"You've had too much Apollinaris, Fielding," smiled Harris.

Fielding was a sober, thoughtful man, professor of Greek in a large New York university. Although a man just turned forty-five, he had for some time felt a crushing realization of years and solitude. It had become a habit with him, when he sought his bed at night, to think it a mortuary couch, or when he left his apartment in the morning, to think he would never return.

In many ways he had felt this sensation of extreme age which crushes middle-aged bachelors. Only the day before he had had a shock when he realized that thinking of his youth had come to be with him a usual pastime. The monotony of all evenings alike, of having only the same places to go, the same companions growing gray with him, made him look back sadly, yearningly. He had a veritable inclination to stand in front of his boys in the Greek class and say: "Gentlemen, I am stifling from a condition of life morally inimical to me. I am lonely, tired, old. Death is all that awaits me. . . . Now then, let us get back to our work."

That night, within a block of his apartment, Fielding had met Harris, a co-professor at the university, and they had talked for some time. Then the friend proposed that they seek some gold-bedecked restaurant on Broadway. He said to Fielding as they walked on:

"We're old fools. We must do something for ourselves when we get in this state of mind. I'm getting sick of the perpetual grinding."

Fielding listened.

"We're not such droll old figures, Fielding. Let us get gay. You know," he went on, "unless we get out of life what is worth most to us, we give back only what is of least worth to life. Our jobs demand that we become broadened. It is our obligation. We don't count for much the way we live now." He turned and looked up at Fielding's sober face. "Don't you think so, Fielding?"

"I've been thinking," said Fielding. . . . "Let's go to your Broadway restaurant."

They had a good dinner, and it helped Fielding immeasurably. Now he looked around at the women; he listened to the music and watched the dancers with an almost abandoned expression on his face.

"Yes, I want to meet her," repeated Fielding. "And it's not the Apollinaris, Harris, or any other external agent," he said, following with his eyes the dark-haired girl as she swayed rhythmically among the tables. "No, you misunderstand my nature, my friend. For the moment I will not explain to you the strange inexplicable circumstances which have brought me here. You must accept this desire on my part in good faith. I mean what I say." He searched into the dancing crowd again. "Did you ever in your life see eyes and hair like that? And the childish way she looks at one. I tell you, Harris, I must meet this little person."

"Fielding! What on earth has come over you?" exclaimed his companion.

"I think we'd best go. The new semester starts tomorrow."

"You see, you do not understand," Fielding pointed out. "Only lately I've become aware of the ridiculousness of my life." He went on gravely. "Why, when I think of how I've aborted every demand of nature in me I feel ashamed. And now I've realized. I'm ashamed of my life, Harris." He paused to take a fork and trace odd figures on the tablecloth. When he spoke again he was as bashful and hesitating as a boy. "You know—I've never had much to do with women. Somehow they've kept away from me and I from them. The one episode I had—oh, it happened years ago—left me bewildered. I've often wanted to talk about it—to understand better. She was a queer sort of girl. We went away—for three days. When we came back she would only look at me and laugh. Then she picked up with a dull, stupid fellow, and I never heard of her again. But she was a girl just like this one—soft, black-haired. It is strange, Harris. Now, for the first time since then—I want to be near someone—feel their touch. You would never understand. I have forgotten to understand—for a good many years."

There came an encore to the strange dance. The girl they were watching gripped close her partner; the cembalo broke into a weird tom-tom melody. For a time the girl and her partner, a rather stout, dissipated-looking man, danced on the further side of the cleared space. Then they came nearer to the two professors, and just as Fielding remarked the close proximity of the dancers' bodies, he caught a whisper from the man's lips, into the ears of the girl. "Hagar, do you love me, kiddie?" Just as they whirled past he caught the whisper, full of all the vehemence and warmth of passion.

The girl lifted her beautiful eyes to those of her partner, and Fielding, watching for only an instant, turned to Harris.

"Come, let us go," he said, queerly agitated.

Three weeks later, while on a hunt for a pair of slippers, he came across Hagar

Revelly. She was nearly hidden back of a counter piled high with shirt waists and muslin remnants.

It took time for the Professor to believe this actuality of his three weeks of dreaming. Then, with much hesitation, he walked up to the counter and said to her: "Were you not dancing with a—a dark gentleman, some three weeks ago?"

Hagar, somewhat confused, looked at the serious, lean face of the stranger. "I don't understand you, sir."

The Professor fingered a stray bit of colored goods that lay spread on the counter.

"I cannot well explain myself," he faltered. "It is just by accident as I was walking through the aisle that I have come upon you. A few weeks ago I was dining at a restaurant where there was dancing. You were there with a dark, stout man. I thought perhaps you might have noticed my friend and me. We were sitting at one of the tables as you danced." He looked at her questioningly. "I'm sorry you didn't notice us. Do you remember the night?"

"Oh, yes, I remember now," the girl answered after some thought.

"And you remember—us?"

Again she thought for a time, then said: "I am very sorry, but I don't."

The Professor was dimly conscious of the fact that a wild embarrassment was clutching at his throat, his lips. "It is too bad," he managed. "I saw you, as I say, that night. I've been back there since, though without the pleasure of seeing you again. I wanted very much to meet you." As the girl looked at him with her large, innocent eyes he stumbled on to his next words. "I—I can't tell you how pleased I am to have run across you in this manner."

"You wanted to meet me?" she asked.

"Yes, miss—very much, indeed. Do you mind?"

"Oh, no. Only—it's so funny."

The Professor went on earnestly. "This is not a usual procedure with me. And I pray you will understand. I wanted to meet you. I wanted to talk with you and have you talk with me. I am willing to do anything to prove my

sincerity. Perhaps I can make myself known to the manager of this store. What is his name?"

The girl's face flushed. "His name is Mr. Greenfield. But oh, for heaven's sake don't say anything to him about it," she gasped. Seeing that she might have given him an insight into a certain intimacy with the manager of the store, she explained: "You know us girls aren't allowed to speak to anyone like this."

"I can quite understand," said Fielding.

There really seemed nothing more to be said. And the girl made the situation increasingly difficult by standing composedly behind the counter, waiting for him to talk without helping in any way. The Professor was plainly conscious of his embarrassment. What was he to do? Kindly Providence had brought her to him after three weeks that never for an instant had been free of her face. And she seemed not averse to talking with him. But how he wished his friend Harris might have been there to advise him!

For some time they stood silent. Then the girl, rather divining the reason for his awkwardness, smiled kindly at him.

This gave Fielding some courage, and he asked: "Have you worked here very long?"

"Oh, yes, an awful long time. Nearly a year."

"I guess you get pretty tired of it, don't you?" he went on, searching his mind for the next words that might carry him over his confusion.

She answered calmly: "Oh, it's rather interesting, sometimes."

He thought it not unreasonable that this might be one of the times. He said to her, bravely, a bit fearfully: "Will you tell me your name?"

"Sure," she answered. "It's Miss Revelly—Hagar Revelly."

"Well, I'm—Professor Fielding. I teach Greek at the university. I should very much like to see you, Miss Revelly." Of a sudden he spoke rather impetuously. "I mean it, Miss Revelly, honestly, sincerely. You interested

me much, indeed, the first time I saw you."

He looked so gentle and fatherly, it seemed to Hagar a fine thing this old man should show her such interest. Visions came to her of a lonely widower and the lucky girl back of a counter of which she had read in a recent newspaper.

She looked down at the counter for a moment, and when she looked up it was to find him gazing intently at her. "Would you consent to see me sometime?" he asked.

"You mean you want to meet me just to talk to me? Why, that's so—odd. I can't talk."

"I know, child. Perhaps I can better explain some other time. Things have been a little—odd—with me. I'd like to have you come and dine with me sometime."

"I've never dined with anyone, meeting them just like this," she hesitated. And then: "Well, there's one man I've dined with, but he's an old friend, and sees that I get home before nine o'clock, most of the time."

"You know him well?" asked Fielding.

Hagar reddened a little. "Oh, I guess, pretty well." She said "pretty well" with some hesitation, as if she measured the words.

"Well, I'll promise to bring you home before nine, if you will just please come, Miss Revelly. Will you come—Thursday?"

When she seemed to ponder over his invitation, he asked again, "Will you?"

"Oh, I guess so," she said.

And as he walked away from her, she was not conscious of the other girls' inquisitive gaze until his stooped back was out of sight. Then, when someone asked, "What did the old guy want?" Hagar would not answer. There seemed something about this strange meeting she could not explain, something comforting and pleasing and sure.

Greenfield came along the aisle at closing time, but she paid little attention to him and was more than ever conscious of his pudgy knuckles and intimate manner. Giving him only a

nod, she hastened out to the girls' dressing room, put on her coat and hat and did not feel at ease until she was hurrying home in the Subway.

Here was a new experience for her, something entirely different. She could not quite describe how she felt. It was like being something clean and white. After she had been around with Greenfield she was always so uncomfortable, feeling dull and ashamed and guilty. It was good to know that now someone could suddenly care in so fatherly a manner.

All evening Hagar went about the house, peaceful and happy. When Herrick, a boy friend, called her on the telephone and wanted to take her to a dance place in Harlem, she said she was too tired and had a headache. When the freckled and grumpy Miss Gillespie, who lived in the room next to her, began talking about the awful tricks of men and how girls should be careful, Hagar only smiled and wished she could tell that now she had found a protector, one who didn't speak about love and want what all the other men wanted. It was only the sacredness of the afternoon's meeting that held her silent.

For a long time she had been an unhappy little person. It seemed to her the world was being unfair. Always she wondered why she had been given beauty if only to be made unhappy and restless by every man she knew. An inner rebellion had long ebbed in and out of her being and she had become unconscionably wiser in the year at Rheinchild's. When men glanced at her now, she could read their thoughts. When they were kind she knew there would be an invitation to dinner and then a repulsed effort at love-making, which would send her home frightfully nervous and unhappy. Every man she met was the same way with her.

She thought she might love some day perhaps, but now what she needed was someone exactly like Mr. Fielding, one who was fatherlike, who could look out for her and protect her. She was indeed happy when she thought how well she had come through many close calls, any one of which might have kept her

from conscientiously accepting his kindness.

She went to her bed that night full of bliss and newfound peacefulness, for the first time in a long while saying in fragmented fashion a prayer she had learned before leaving home.

After his meeting with Hagar, Professor Fielding was filled with only one definite cause for living. In the class room, in his study, her sweet face was ever shining in front of him. At times he would talk aloud to her. Once he came near calling her "kiddie," the word of affection used by her partner that first night. He walked differently, more buoyantly, gaily: he was more conscious of his face in the mirror, finding himself framing certain words into endearing sentences and then looking at himself and laughing shamedly at his conceit.

Most of the time he persuaded himself he was in the position of being only fatherly to her, an attitude which the next moment would be quite inconsistent with "Hagar," or perhaps "dear," issuing forth unconsciously from his lips.

Only once, just before meeting her, did he question the fitness of giving her at a first meeting his name and vocation. And when he found himself waiting at the corner of Rheinchild's department store, he felt a culprit and, strangely as it seemed, youthful—as youthful as some boys who also were waiting for the big store to close.

Then Hagar was in front of him and holding out her hand, and he could hardly believe this soft, big-eyed child was actually there to go with him to dinner. It made him forget in the instant all the previous fears he had entertained.

"Where will we go?" he asked, after their greeting.

"Wherever you want to," she said agreeably. She thought a moment. "I know a dandy place on Fourteenth Street, but it's German, and maybe you wouldn't like it."

He smiled wistfully, pleased at her eagerness to help him. "Oh, I'm of German ancestry," he said.

Throughout the dinner she sat en-

raptured by his talk. He revealed himself entirely to her. She never thought that people could be so lonely as he told her he had been. All evening she listened to him intently and no longer had eyes for the waiters or occupants of the nearby tables. They sat talking and looking caressingly at each other, much as might a father and daughter.

He talked and she listened, only now and again saying, "Oh, how interesting!" and all the time searching her mind for words that would show greater intelligence.

For Fielding the evening was the entrancing fulfillment of a dream. He felt on his skin, in his eyes, even in his heart, a rekindling of a lost warmth whenever she looked at him. Once he touched her hand, and she squeezed back, thinking it the right thing to do for his kindness to her.

It was while they were sitting over the black coffee that Fielding, rather inadvertently, asked about the friend she had spoken of.

"You mean the man I was with at the dance?"

"Yes. Do you like him?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Oh, he seemed such a stupid person for one so bright as you."

"Am I bright?" she asked innocently.

The Professor studied her and said, with a caress in his voice: "You've the gift of intuition, child, of understanding." He lost himself in his words. "And you've youth, God-given youth and charm."

When his thoughts appeared to have come back to her she said: "I wish you wouldn't talk like that, Mr. Fielding."

Again he regarded her brown eyes and quaint, childish mouth for what seemed an interminable time. Then he said suddenly: "What do you and this man talk about, Hagar?"

She replied honestly: "Oh, I don't know; we just talk—about things in general. Mr. Greenfield is pretty interesting sometimes."

"Are you always interested in him?"

She looked out through the window into the street, where the yellow light in

front of the restaurant was playing upon the crowds that passed. He seemed to be taking Greenfield so seriously that she wondered if he knew how far her intimacy had gone with the manager, and if he recognized the name. She felt more at ease when he said: "Of what are you thinking?"

"Oh, forgive me." She roused herself.

"I was just thinking, I've got a good deal to think about sometimes."

"Has he ever tried to kiss you?"

"Why, Mr. Fielding, how can you dare ask that?"

She was surprised at what seemed to her a childish understanding of life.

Then he went on: "I can't help asking you these things, Hagar. I guess I am strange. It's been my lot only to work, and wonder if I would ever be a little happy. Other men may know better the art of approaching women. I haven't been out in their world. . . . Once, a little girl I knew—looked a good deal like you. Perhaps that accounts for my feeling toward you."

"She mustn't have been very beautiful if she looked like me."

He saw the precociousness of her interruption. "She was very beautiful," Fielding answered. He could hardly control now the desire that filled him to take her and hug her close to him. There was a fire in his eyes, and for the first time Hagar noticed his long, thin fingers trembling.

"Please answer me, Hagar," he went on earnestly. "It means—I'd like to know."

"Why, whatever are you saying?"

She drew away from him. Somehow he seemed to have lost all the fatherliness in his manner. He seemed to her something else, like Greenfield, when the manager grew excited. And just for a passing moment the thin pale face so close to her became almost repulsive. However, the feeling passed away in an instant, and when he said more calmly, "You must answer me," she interpreted his momentary excitement as being indicative of only a protecting interest.

Nevertheless she was disturbed, clenching her little hands together and trying to draw out of the walls some

thought that might make her better understand him.

At last she said to him restlessly: "Oh, you are so queer, Mr. Fielding, I can hardly understand you."

Fielding, realizing that he had allowed pent-up emotions to come to the surface, said more gently: "I cannot help it, child. You must just let it pass without giving it a thought. You are bringing out in me a dozen years of piled-up misunderstanding of myself. He paused for a time, and when he went on again, it was more in half-soliloquy. "Yes, I have misunderstood myself all this time. You must see it."

"I—I think it's awful nice of you to talk—sweet like that," said Hagar frankly. "Mr. Greenfield is so different. He—" She faltered.

"Go on please."

"Oh, he always wants me close to him, and wants me to love him."

"I can understand," murmured Fielding. "We don't need to talk about it."

But Hagar went on, rather reminiscently: "Sometimes I get so tired of it I can hardly stand him. And then sometimes I don't mind so much. Girls like me ain't got so much chance—and then he's so rich. Anyway, we never just sit and talk—sensibly—like this."

When Fielding took her home, and had gained his apartment, he was overcome by his thoughts, speculating upon whether she realized her effect upon him, whether she would want to see him again.

During the next days he did not try to fathom the metamorphosis worked in his being. In fact, he felt he dared not try sobering himself by solving this complex situation. He was actually in love with one whom he had only just met, a person far beneath him socially, mentally, idealistically, and yet—he throbbed when he thought of her; she came to him with every sighing breath of wind; when he shaved it was with the hope that he would hear from her, that she might see him looking fresh and rosy; when he spoke in front of his pupils he wished she might have been there to hear his words of authority. At other times he would be filled with the lover's

doubt, constantly wondering, if he did hear from her, how she would write, how the sentences would be constructed.

He certainly did not think of getting married, for he did not feel he had sufficient courage to give up his career or to face the inevitable disillusionment that comes when one gropes back of the mysterious veil of woman. He had always felt the attractiveness of women rested in their being known slightly, in their remaining unexplored, and enigmas.

How easily his philosophies were destroyed! He held out for a week, then sent a note to Hagar at her boarding place. It was a rather pathetic confession Professor Fielding penned to her. He even called her "kiddie," and then was so self-conscious about it he sought the mirror to see if the youthful word had any effect upon his physical appearance.

DEAR HAGAR:

I must see you, kiddie. Yes, I must see you. I will call for you. It will be nice to see your beautiful black hair and your glorious light-of-God eyes and your smile. I will call for you quite early. I should say quite near seven, and we'll dine some place that pleases you.

I have missed you considerably, my child.

They met at the corner by Rheinchild's. When Fielding took her hand and said "Hagar" once or twice, she wondered why he was so agitated. It made her nervous. And when they were seated on the little balcony at Bustanoby's and he immediately began talking to her, she somehow wished that she hadn't come.

And then the spell broke for her.

"Hagar, I am unable to go through the usual process of preliminary acquaintance with you. I am praying you will understand. I must tell you how I regard you. Oh, Hagar, it's so new for me! You've been with me every moment. I cannot deal in the subtleties of affection. I can only blurt it out. . . . Hagar, my dear child, I love you." Placing his hands over her fingers firmly, he repeated: "I love you, Hagar. Do you understand?"

She hardly knew how to answer him. She was scared and ill at ease. At last she said softly, not knowing what else

to say: "I—I am very glad, Mr. Fielding."

"Oh, do you mean it, Hagar? Do you know what it means coming from a man in my position? You must know, Hagar, mine has always been an intellectual life and far away from affection and endearment."

"I think it's awful nice of you," she said.

Now she was beginning to comprehend. Her heart started pounding in her throat. It was nothing he had said that warranted this queer feeling so much as the impending thing that showed in his manner and eyes.

When he squeezed her hand a bit frenziedly she became actually frightened.

"Why, what—do you mean—Professor Fielding?" she cried. "You're so different—all of a sudden!"

He stared into her face. "Mean? Ah, my dear little woman, how I love you! I love you with all my life. Oh, Hagar!"

His sudden vehemence caused her to say "What!" quite spontaneously, and as she saw the expression of love in his face, she pulled away from him.

However, the cataclysmic proportions of his desire for her were now beyond his control. It was as if a bomb had exploded which proved to him he had not declassified himself in the files of society by his long evasion of the emotions. For only an instant he hesitated; then a wild look came into his pale face, his voice trembled and his hands sought her arms, her shoulders. "Yes, I mean I love you. I mean—" He controlled himself as he saw the terror in Hagar's face. But in another moment he seemed to lose himself entirely. His arm went about her shoulders and he drew her face savagely to his lips. "I can't help it—I can't!" he cried. "You are so soft, so wonderful."

Then he went on quite fiercely, not heeding Hagar's protestations:

"Hagar, I am going to make you an offer, and I do it not impulsively, as you may imagine, but with the feeling that comes from long enduring and hoping. And I care nothing about what

the world will say. I am sure of myself. Hagar, I want you to be my wife."

She was too startled, too overwhelmed by what seemed to her the sudden blighting of all her hopes, to answer him. By some process of reasoning she had never placed him in the class of lover or comrade, but as a father, a confessor, one to whom she could tell her love secrets. Even now she had been debating with herself whether to tell him something about Herrick. She was woefully disappointed. When she could control the angry words that wanted to come, she said to him: "Why, Mr. Fielding, you musn't talk like this to me. It ain't nice of you."

"Nice!" he echoed.

"Yes. I don't think a man of your age ought to talk like that."

"Tell me what you mean, Hagar."

She spoke rather bitterly now. "Oh, I mean you're too old. Why, Mr. Greenfield is nearly too old, and he's only forty-four. I think you ought to be ashamed."

A saddened smile tightened the corners of Fielding's mouth. "How old do you think I am, Hagar?"

"Oh, I guess you're about sixty, aren't you?"

"Hagar," he said, "look at me. Tell me exactly what you think of me, how you feel about me."

She thought for some time, then said with conviction: "Oh, it's pretty hard to say. You know, somehow, men like you aren't supposed to talk about love and things like that. You're too sensible."

"So you think it is all right for men like Mr. Greenfield and not for me?"

"Yes. Of course it's different with him. He's not 'intellectual,' and you don't feel so far away from him. He doesn't understand as much as you do; you know, I can see these things—because I am getting pretty old myself. I'll be seventeen in two months."

For a week Professor Fielding was absent from his lectures. When he returned his pupils remarked that his manner was subdued.

And for some time after that he appeared to be fighting off an illness.

DESIDERIUM

By Richard Le Gallienne

FACE in the tomb, that lies so still,
May I draw near,
And watch you sleep and love you;
Without word or tear?

You smile, your eyelids flicker;
Shall I tell
How the world goes that lost you?
Shall I tell?

Ah, love, lift not your eyelids;
'Tis the same
Old story that we laughed at,
Still the same.

We knew it, you and I,
We knew it all:
Still is the small the great,
The great the small;

Still the cold lie quenches
The flaming truth,
And still embattled age
Wars against youth.

Yet I believe still in the ever-living God
That fills your grave with perfume,
Writing your name in violets across the sod,
Shielding your holy face from hail and snow;
And, though the withered stay, the lovely go.
No transitory wrong or wrath of things
Shatters the faith—that each slow minute brings
That meadow nearer to us where your feet
Shall flutter near me like white butterflies—
That meadow where immortal lovers meet,
Gazing forever in immortal eyes.



MARRIAGE—Government without the consent of the governed.

THE TEAR SQUEEZER

By Barry Benefield

ONE of the late afternoon commuters streaming across West Street toward the Chambers Street ferry that April afternoon was a fattish, fuzzy, short-legged young man with a long, peculiarly flat-tipped nose and a thin, brown beard trimmed affectedly to a Vandyke point. Abe Pittle was on his way from an insurance office on lower Broadway, where he was in the book-keeping department, to Caldwell, N. J., where, with his wife Amelia and his daughter Alice, he occupied a stunted rented house, which he called his bungalow when speaking of it in the city. He was about to meet one of those tremendous trivialities that turn a life.

Abe was thirty-three years old, and his salary was eighteen dollars a week, to which he added six or seven by doing overtime. He had come originally from the country near Danbury, Conn., and his most abiding recollections of his home life were a paternal grandmother always harrying him for taking more butter than he needed, of his father threatening him for using too much sugar, of his mother weakly complaining that he wasted fully half of his meat by stripping out the lean and leaving the fat.

Inside the ferryhouse, Abe drew quickly away from the jostling crowd and began searching desperately through his pockets. For fear of extravagant impulses, he never brought to town more than thirty-five cents, for lunch and incidentals, unless there was something special to buy. He had meant to bring the money for a new commutation ticket that morning, but he had forgotten it. Though he knew perfectly well that there was not nearly enough money in his pockets to buy a single fare ticket to

Caldwell, yet his hands went on searching, his big white eyes staring in suspense.

An amiable old gentleman, one of that somewhat large number who eagerly hunt for the not too costly inward glow to be got by helping other people solve small difficulties, stepped out of the crowd.

"I know what's the matter," he said, smiling triumphantly. "I've had it happen to me more than once. You've lost your commutation ticket and you're short of change. Where do you go? No matter; a dollar will take you there, won't it?"

"Yes, but—"

"Don't waste time talking," interrupted the happy old gentleman. "We commuters must waste no time talking until we're safely in the train. You'll see me here again some afternoon; pay me back then."

He hurried on, and Abe took his place at the end of the line at the ticket office, flushed with gratitude, resolved to stand on watch at the ferryhouse every day until he repaid the dollar and thanked its lender. He wished he had had presence of mind enough to ask the old gentleman for his business card; then he could have sent the money by mail that night.

"Pretty fine, that's what I say," he kept repeating to himself all the way home on the train. He told his wife of the incident, reviewing his impressions of his benefactor's appearance that he might the better remember him. But all the time, up to the last minute before dropping off to sleep, Abe was dimly conscious that in the back part of his mind was a thought—not quite a hope,

yet—that possibly he would never see the old gentleman again; and so he would have gotten a dollar for nothing.

Something for nothing! It was a radiant thought that always flooded his soul with joy. To bear home some article bought with tobacco or some trade coupons pleased his heart for days. The restaurant where he lunched was run on the honor system; the rush of noonday patrons helped themselves from the tables and shelves, declaring and paying their indebtedness on the way out. Abe understated his bill five or ten cents every day. As often as he dared he enrolled for overtime in the office at night and then dawdled, doing nothing; that was cheering. And to find money was a rare happening, perfect in its exquisite quality.

The next day Abe went to town supplied with money to buy a commutation ticket, and a dollar besides. At the ferryhouse, in the late afternoon crowd ahead of him, his benefactor's gray head appeared before his eyes, but they turned away quickly. When they looked back the gray head was out of sight. Abe swore to his wife that night that he had not seen that fine old gentleman, as she called him; Abe swore even to himself that he had not seen him. After that he hurried through the ferryhouse, staring at the advertisements on the walls or scanning the headlines of his newspaper.

The idea of that dollar for nothing remained with him. It was banished to the back part of his mind, the darkest part; but even there he warmed it, and it was sprouting; he felt that every day it was becoming more fixed, spreading out, producing branches that frightened yet fascinated him.

One night early in May, having enrolled for overtime in the office, he stole an hour and went to the ferryhouse at nine o'clock. He sat down to wait for his boat. Suddenly standing up, he began searching frantically through his pockets until he attracted the attention of a man who sat near him, of whom he asked the loan of fifty cents.

Presently he was using this maneuver two or three times a week at the Cham-

bers Street ferry. Then one of his victims called upon him for the return of a dollar, after which Abe spent five cents every day to ride up to the Twenty-third Street ferry, where he practised his new trick as often as he dared.

In July, the vacation period for the men in the insurance office having begun, Abe received the usual two weeks' pay in advance and was told to go and enjoy himself. It had been his custom to spend these vacations on the Jersey coast, where tents supplied with gas stoves and other housekeeping necessities could be rented by the week for a small amount.

At home that night Abe told his wife that his company had suffered some unusual losses and was giving only vacations without pay; he could not afford to take any at all; he would have to work straight through the season. Next year, though, they would have a rattling good vacation, he promised stoutly, whether the company paid for it or not. Alice cried all night with disappointment, for ten years sees little comfort at the tremendous distance marked by one-tenth of her whole past life. And at breakfast his large wife did not try to conceal her contempt for the inefficiency of a man who could not manage a two weeks' vacation once a year.

Though Abe had to get up every morning and return to New York to fulfill his falsehood, yet he could not go near the office. At night he worked the lost-ticket trick at the ferryhouses along the Hudson; the time between early morning and late afternoon he spent loafing in the parks. It was dull, but he was getting a little something for nothing, and that in addition to the thirty-six dollars of vacation money from the office.

After two or three days it occurred to him that he ought not to waste eight hours, and he went to the Grand Central Station to study how to adapt the lost-ticket trick for use there so as to fill in profitably the eight empty hours. It was easy.

In the daytime he oscillated between the Grand Central and the Pennsyl-

vania stations; in the late afternoon he operated at all the ferries used by commuters. Sometimes the original theme of the lost ticket was varied, but the outline was always the same. There was ever a pressing necessity to get to another city and a lack of money, due to sickness or loss or some other sudden stroke of ill luck that might befall anybody.

On the Saturday before the Monday when he was to return to the insurance office Abe accomplished a feat that thrilled him. Up to that time he had never got more than two or three dollars from one person. Going to a telegraph booth in the Grand Central Station, he wrote out the following telegram to himself, dating it from Chicago: "Alice is dying and calling for papa. Come quick.—Amelia." Dropping it on the floor and stepping on it to make it appear much handled, he put it in his pocket folded and sank down despairingly on a seat by a man he shrewdly guessed to be a Westerner.

It was an inspiration on Abe's part to write his own daughter's name, for as he dwelt upon the idea of her dying and calling vainly for him his eyes moistened; and when he pulled out the telegram, opened it and began reading it he fell easily into tears, presently rising to the achievement of an audible sob.

"What's wrong, bud?" asked the Westerner.

Abe simply handed him the message, mumbling through his tears: "My baby. Lost my pocketbook in the subway on the way down here. Pick-pocket, I guess."

Out of that he realized thirty dollars. In his two weeks he had gotten in a hundred and fifty dollars more money than he had ever made in his life within so short a time, and almost all for nothing. To soothe his sense of shame, which was aroused more by the size of his takings than by their nature, Abe told himself that his operations were in the nature of a vacation lark, and that on Monday he would go back to work.

On Monday, however, he did not go back to the office. He simply could not

bring himself to desert a field whose products so nearly approximated the perfect principle of all for nothing. He continued to cultivate the field assiduously, coming to town early in the morning and often not returning home until late at night, when he explained to his wife that he had been doing overtime at the office. He was working harder, he said, in order to make sure that they could have a first class vacation the following summer whether the office paid for it or not. His wife was very proud of him, and was zealously tender in attending to all his wants at home.

In September a railroad detective in the Grand Central Station, who had been watching Abe for some time, arrested him for begging; and the police magistrate, being told that a bankbook showing deposits of over a thousand dollars had been found on him, sentenced him to a month in the workhouse under the assumed name of Samuel Gardiner.

Sam, alias Abe, saw his position not without comforting aspects. He would get a month's board free, for he would escape work somehow; and he wrote to his wife that he was about to lose his job, that he was discouraged, and that by the time the letter reached her he would be at the bottom of the East River. "Kiss little Alice good-bye for me," he concluded. He wept over that. And yet, when he should return from Blackwell's Island, there would be only himself to support. A turnkey mailed the letter for him.

The month in the workhouse took out what little poison there was left in the sting of the beggar's profession, and the new Sam came out with his mind made up to get all he could for nothing. It was necessary, however, to find new fields, the railroad stations and ferries having become too dangerous for constant cultivation.

Sam had studied that question in his leisure. Already he had learned that men, as a rule, are most generous after meals, because the physical exhilaration arising from the first flush of the filtering food brings with it an increase of amiability. He had learned, too, that

an affected frankness and simplicity works powerfully on men. Three or four chopouses on and near Broadway constituted his new territory. His speech was always the same, and always accompanied by a plaintive, placating smile:

"One moment, sir, please. I won't tell you a lie; I see I couldn't fool you, sir, so I won't stall. I'm simply dying for a slug of plain old booze—that's all. I was— But you don't want to hear a hard luck story, and I don't blame you. God! I just want the booze!"

The chopouses paid well after dinner, but for breakfast and lunch they were almost barren. Then the men came out in a great hurry to go about their business; they were not often sufficiently relaxed to listen to even his cunningly abbreviated tale. To supplement his income he added the department stores to his field.

Returns there, however, were unexpectedly small; for though the women gave more frequently than the men, they gave such disproportionately small amounts; and that notwithstanding the fact that his labor with them was long and arduous. A simple affectation of frankness with them was futile; several times he tried the drink story on shoppers, and they were horrified and harsh. The husky throat, the brimming eye, the complicated lie, these were the tiresome tools he had to use upon their purses.

But even these two complementary fields could not contain the new Sam's ambition for long. Very few shoppers come to town before ten o'clock, so he waylaid clerks, stenographers and salesgirls coming out of the busy downtown subway stations in the early hours. Moreover, there was little to be got at the chopouses after the dinner period, so he cultivated the restaurants that do a heavy business after the theater. There was almost no work in his regular fields on Sunday, so he added the churches to his territory.

Most savings banks fix a limit beyond which they will not pay interest on deposits. The limit of Sam's bank was three thousand dollars, and before

Christmas he had started an account in a second bank. Throughout the fall the fattish little father had been promising himself to sacrifice a day in a trip to Caldwell in the hope of seeing Alice, of hearing her laugh perhaps. He loved her tiny, gurgling laugh. But no day having come in the fall that he felt he could give up, he had postponed his hope until the winter holidays.

Starting the second bank account, however, seemed so to increase the value of the days to him, and Christmas brought so many additional people to town, and the holiday spirit so wrought upon their generosity, that the little seller of inward glows simply could not face his promise; he put off the trip until summer, and then didn't make it.

Now and then Sam worried somewhat about Alice's material comfort; not a great deal, however, for Amelia, he would say, was faithful, resourceful and a good worker. There was a satisfaction to him in the assurance that his daughter would never be in want while her mother was alive; and, heaven knows, the big blonde woman was strong and healthy enough, except for a little trouble of the heart, which was mostly in her head, though she fooled away a fearful lot of money on patent medicines for it. He guessed she had dropped that foolishness now.

A second and then a third year went by, and Sam's various fields, under more and more expert cultivation, yielded more heavily; and he was worth nearly ten thousand dollars. No longer content with the mere four per cent of the savings banks, and his work in the insurance office having taught him something about the best investments in New York, he now bought a twenty thousand dollar tenement on Avenue A, leaving a mortgage on the unpaid part of the price.

But he did not live there himself; it was too rich for him. Every room in it brought in more than the cost of his attic in a damp and moldy old private dwelling in Greenwich Village.

From time to time, particularly when the police were in one of their spasmodic clean-up campaigns, Sam was arrested,

but he never again committed the beggar's solecism of being caught with his bankbooks on his person. Sometimes he went to the workhouse for a week or so; more often he was discharged by a fatigued magistrate.

Once, just after the appointment of a new police commissioner who was particularly hostile to beggars, the streets were made too uncomfortable for Sam. He knew from experience that this spasm of artificially stimulated zeal on the part of the police would wear off after a week or two; and, having nothing to lose, he yielded to the tender temptation of going to Caldwell to inquire about Alice. His mendicant clothes and generally changed appearance insured him against recognition.

An extremely sophisticated and hungrily talkative woman in a bakery near where he had lived said she could tell him something of the Pittle family. Mrs. Amelia Pittle had died, and the daughter Alice had been taken in by a neighbor; but after a year or so the girl had gone away, first to Newark to work in a store, it was said, then to New York. And now she was in the theatrical business there, some folks told her. The bakery woman shut her left eye in a long, hardly contracted wink, and turned to wait on a customer.

Well, he had done his best, Sam assured himself; no one could do more. If she was in New York, he might come across her some day if he kept his eyes open. He returned to the city as soon as he got a chance to hide himself in the lavatory of a passing train and thus save his fare. In a short while, the police zeal having abated, Sam took up once more the cultivation of his old fertile fields, always after that keeping a sharp eye on the crowds when he was working the theatrical districts. He sometimes wondered vaguely what that bakery woman had meant by her wink.

In the sixth year of his profession, after a short visit to the workhouse Sam made a radical change in the character of his operations. For some time he had been dissatisfied with his old methods. Though he did not definitely

formulate his objections, yet he was painfully conscious that his operations fell too far without the perfect principle of all for nothing to gain him anything like artistic content. There was too much straining of the inventive faculty—in short, too much that approximated labor. He studied how to modify his methods and came to a decision.

He was now thirty-nine years old. Most of his face was hidden by a brindled bramble of gray-brown beard. The sandy hair on the back half of his partly bald head hung down upon his coat collar in gummy, grimy strings. Weakened by poor food and exposure, burned by the fires of bounding ambition, he saw with increasing satisfaction the fat drying out from under his fast wrinkling skin, and his cheeks sinking into pathetic hollows. His whitish eyes looked bigger than ever. It was his ability to give them the staring vacancy of the sightless, which had hitherto been of occasional use to him, that now decided his choice of methods.

At a secondhand clothing store on Seventh Avenue he bought a suit more ragged than the one he wore, deliberately choosing one much too large for him, and of a gay checked pattern of reds and blues. Because the suit swallowed up his figure, he seemed to be smaller and more fragile than he was; because its colors had been loud and brazenly boastful in its original high estate, it now commanded pity, so far and low had it fallen.

A pair of black goggles, a tin cup, a hand organ some twelve inches square from a junk shop, and a little tin sign to hang from around his neck down on his chest saying, "Sightless Sam," these completed his equipment. Removing one side of the organ, he stuck several holes in the bellows to still further weaken it, and so tampered with the rest of the machinery that it gave forth but two notes, one high and one low, which sounded like a ghostly scream and a ghostly groan from a bottomless pit.

The first day Sam went forth in his new part was filled with such tremendous adventure that he felt sick at

the stomach and tremulous in the legs; for, besides the time he might lose, or almost lose, the equipment had cost over six dollars, more than half of which he must sacrifice if he resold it. And he was now worth only a little more than fifty thousand dollars.

But even the first day was a nerve-racking success; and he settled down to meet the years as "Sightless Sam." It did not seem to him that his new system could possibly be improved upon in this grim world of merely approximate happinesses.

In the mornings he squatted on the pavement in the financial districts, desperately turning out of the tiny organ the ghostly scream and the ghostly groan. In the mature day hours he waylaid shoppers on Broadway and Sixth Avenue. In the night hours he moved uptown into the zone of diners and theatergoers.

Now there was no running about, no weeping, no standing in strained attitudes, no accosting of people in a hurry, no rebuffs to wound a tender heart. He simply sat, looking down, apparently in deep dejection, but really at his fascinating flat-tipped nose; or looking up in staring, mute appeal, turning the organ crank; frequently emptying the coins from the cup lest it become discouragingly full.

It is true he still had to turn a crank, and though it required little work to do that, yet it had the appearance of labor. This, however, did not at first occupy his mind enough to embitter him; in the beginning he largely waved it aside except when he was depressed.

And yet his artist soul could not be deceived and drugged into quietude by a partial success. There was no blinking the fact that he still had to turn the crank of the little organ. He studied hard year after year how to eliminate that last impediment in the way of the working of the perfect principle of all for nothing. After ten futile years he discovered what he sought, and that not through logic and psychology, but through an accident, as so many important discoveries have been made.

After theater hours uptown Sam

usually walked down Sixth Avenue to his room in Greenwich Village to save carfare. Below Greeley Square, in a dingy side street, was then the Horseshoe, the largest, the most skillfully managed, the best protected and the most long-lived of New York's older dance halls; surrounded by obscure "hotels" in that and other unsavory side streets. The doors opened at eight P. M. and closed at three A. M., promptly.

One night after twelve o'clock Sam walked down Sixth Avenue, turned into the Horseshoe street and stood for some time on the sidewalk opposite the dance hall, watching the door. Men and women, individually, were constantly going into the place; men and women in couples were constantly coming out of it. Every time the inner door, beyond the vestibule, opened and closed, it cut off and left outside a quivering slice of tinkling music and babbling laughter.

Here, then, even after midnight, were many gay people and much liveliness. Sam put on his black goggles, pounded his way across the street with his stick, sat down on the sidewalk at the vestibule under the emblem that gave the place its felicitous name and began grinding out the ghostly scream and the ghostly groan.

At first he used this stand only after midnight, but it paid so well that he appeared at the Horseshoe ahead of the vanguard of regulars, and left only after the doorkeeper, the bouncer, the musicians and the waiters had gone home. At first, too, he generously ground out the organ's full two notes, but one night three quaint young revelers paid him twenty dollars for the organ and took it away in a hansom, which was otherwise heavily loaded.

Sam could not get his immediate consent to spend perhaps a dollar for another battered organ, and so the next night he sat under the horseshoe with his cup on one knee and a bunch of lead pencils on the other. His receipts suffered no losses. Moreover, a week's average was quite up to a week with the organ. Sam was astounded. Here,

then, it was not necessary to attract attention with a pathetic noise; his "sightless" eyes did the work with these abandoned women and their reckless companions.

Thinking afterward of his discovery, Sam could not help being sometimes in great pain when he considered the labor he had lost; but he was, for the most part, a cheery optimist, and he preferred to look gladly forward to the joyous future with the pencils, rather than sourly back at the dark past with the organ. The bunch of pencils became his only histrionic property. He never again turned a crank, nor heard the ghostly screams and ghostly groans struggling from the battered little black box and sinking unheeded through his ears.

After a year at the Horseshoe, Sam began to suspect what the fat bakery woman's wink had meant when she had said that Alice Pittle was in New York and in the theatrical business. One of the Horseshoe sisterhood, who had just begun to make that hall her nightly headquarters, possessed a thick, throaty, gurgling little laugh that awakened dim old associations in Sam when he first heard it. His mind played fearfully around the possibility, which was fast growing toward certainty, but he was afraid to talk to her openly about either himself or her; she was already a recklessly generous giver, and he was unwilling to disturb a status quo that included her rich tips.

Sam came to be an institution at the Horseshoe. After a while he brought a canvas-covered stool with him; and when it was wet or cold outside, the proprietor permitted him to sit inside the vestibule, thus purchasing for himself at little price from this convenient bank of magnanimity an unusual kind of glowing feeling for himself.

Sam developed several subsidiary sources of revenue. One of them was selling cocaine to the "sniffers" among the open-hearted sisterhood that walked under the horseshoe. Another was an ingenious trick of petty blackmail. Knowing them all by their "Christian" names, or by the names they had as-

sumed, as well as the number of years they had been coming to the dance hall, he called them Tessie No. Three or Polly No. Five, advancing the numbers as time went by, unless they paid to hold time back. It was a great joke—but not a rare one—among the habitués who were in the secret to hear "Sightless Sam" address someone in his insinuating whine as Grace No. Ten, for instance.

They say that New Yorkers rarely see the sky; but by tilting his head back against the vestibule, and turning it slightly, Sam could raise his eyes above the elevated track out on Sixth Avenue; and out beyond that, beyond the Hudson River, above the State where he had once lived, he could see the stars through the black goggles. One night in April, as he sat thus staring, a plump, blonde little woman stopped by the stool and sat down on the edge of the vestibule floor that projected a few inches over the sidewalk.

"April is the swell month, ain't it, Sam?" she said. "Then you kind of breathe in the trees and flowers. But it sort of makes me blue."

"Does it, Edith No. Five?" asked Sam, emphasizing the numeral. For though he was still adrift among the goggle-dimmed stars, yet he was ready to attend to Edith's case at once. He remembered distinctly when she had come; she had been walking under the horseshoe two weeks over five years; and she had not paid up this year. He had already whispered the threatening "No. Five" at her several times without avail. He meant to have his customary generous gift from her upon the passing of a new year or know the reason why.

She paid no attention, apparently, to his threatening numeral; she sat silently staring out across the street, her chin in her hands. Assuming his most humble, most oily, most sympathetic tone—the tone he always employed when he wanted to trap a downhearted girl into giving him intimate confidences to be used later for petty blackmailing purposes—Sam spoke at the small plump blonde, not looking around:

"Well, Edith No. Five, summer will be here pretty soon. I suppose when it gets hot you'll go away for a while—and see your folks—the old folks at home, maybe."

"I haven't any folks, Sam."

"Dead?" The goggled little beggar smiled behind his hand.

"Yes, Sam, dead. It was kind of funny, too—my father and mother died the same day. He lost his job, got the blues and jumped into the river. He wrote my mother he was going to do it; and the shock killed her; her heart was weak, anyhow, though she did take a lot of patent medicines for it a long time."

Sam didn't say anything for a while. Then he asked:

"And how did you make out after that? Was that the reason you got into this business?"

"Partly, I guess, Sam. One of the neighbors out there in Caldwell—that's where we lived—took me in and made a sort of cheap servant out of me as long as I would stand for it, and then—aw, cut it out, Sam; don't try to make me tell you the sto-hory of me life. I wouldn't let you make any money off me on that, anyhow. If you knew all the sad sto-hory of me, Sam, I wouldn't pay you a nickel not to tell anybody you saw."

She laughed jokingly, poked him in the ribs, and he heard the rustle of her dress as she rose.

"Wait a minute, Alice Pittle," he called in a low, confidential, grieving voice, now turning on his stool to look at her through his goggles. "Wait just a minute, Alice; I want to tell you something."

"How the hell did you know my name was Alice? Aw, well, that don't make no difference. But I'm curious to know how you got it. How? Did some of my dear lady frien's squeal on me to you?"

"Bend your head down and I'll whisper to you, Alice." One of the cabdrivers standing nearby on the edge

of the curb called over at her: "Stop that flirtin' with Sam, Edith. He's a dead one."

"I know your name," whispered Sam into the ear at his mouth, "because I named you. I am your father. Something got the matter with my eyes, I lost my job and had to take up this business. Yes, I'm your pore old father, Alice."

She had straightened up suddenly. He felt her looking him up and down. And then her scrutiny concentrated on his long, flat-tipped nose. Would she remember that? Except for his long schooling in maintaining a patiently gloomy countenance, he could not have helped smiling. She bent down to him again.

"Sam, you're a dirty old liar. A joke's a joke, but, believe me, you old faker, this is crowdin' it too far."

Laughing, she went on into the Horse-shoe. But on her way home that night, she stopped by his stool and bent over him.

"How much to forget it, Sam?"

He knew that she knew, and he knew that she was ashamed of him. He hesitated to think a minute, to calculate how much she was ashamed.

"Ten dollars a week," he answered in his saddest, huskiest little voice.

She slipped it into his hand, and hurried away.

She continued paying him ten dollars a week as long as she lived, which was for four years, during which time he never mentioned his relationship again. After she was gone he did miss her thick, throaty, gurgling laughter floating in and out through the Horse-shoe door, and he also missed the ten dollars a week.

One night a runaway cab horse dashed up on the sidewalk and trampled Sam to death. His body was saved from Potter's field by the charity of the Horse-shoe sisters, who wept over him. It was later discovered that the Abe Pittle estate aggregated some half-million dollars. No will was found, nor any heir.



THE GIRL IN THE COFFIN*

By Theodore Dreiser

CHARACTERS

WILLIAM MAGNET (*a foreman of loom workers*)

JOHN FERGUSON (*a strike leader*)

MRS. MAMIE SHAEFER (*a striker's wife*)

MRS. MARGARET RICKERT (*another striker's wife*)

MRS. HANNAH LITTIG (*an old woman*)

NICHOLAS BLUNDY (*a young mill worker*)

TIMOTHY McGRATH (*a member of the strikers' executive committee*)

TIME: *Between seven and eight o'clock of an early spring evening.*

PLACE: *A large mill town.*

SCENE—The parlor of WILLIAM MAGNET's house, which is that of a well-to-do workingman. At the left is a door leading outside to the porch. On either side of the door is a window, with blinds drawn and heavy coarse white lace curtains. To the right is a wooden mantel with a plush lambrequin, an ornamental clock, a gilded plaster cast and a photograph in a celluloid frame. Over the mantel hangs a large "crayon portrait" of a woman in a heavy silvered frame. Toward the rear is a door leading to the dining room and the kitchen. In one corner stands a cheap mahogany upright piano with silk drapery hung over one corner. A large highly decorated vase and a chromo under glass representing St. Cecelia playing to the angels (this picture supported by a bracket) ornament the top of the piano. To the right of it is a standing lamp (unlighted when the curtain rises). Near this are three tiers of section bookcases filled with "sets." Under the window at the left is a small upholstered plush sofa with a sofa cushion made of cigar ribbons. In middle of the back wall hangs a large framed lithograph portrait of JOHN FERGUSON, strike leader, standing in an oratorical attitude. A real silk flag with gilt lettering and gilt fringe is draped over one corner of this portrait. On the floor directly below this picture—far enough out so that there is room to pass between it and the wall—stands a black coffin on trestles. The pallid profile and thick dark hair of a dead woman are barely visible.

To the right of the stage toward the front stands a small oak table with a lace cover and a large oil lamp with a painted china shade giving a dim light.

MRS. MAMIE SHAEFER is discovered seated to the left of the table in a straight chair, crocheting lace edging. She

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is stout, neat, vigorous, red-cheeked, her hair brushed tightly back, and dressed in tight-fitting black merino. To her left MRS. MARGARET RICKERT occupies a cane-seated rocker. She also is stout and rosy, but of a more placid type. She wears a brown shawl and over her head a knitted scarf of pink wool. While MRS. RICKERT rocks and MRS. SHAEFER crochets, enter from the dining room door MRS. LITTIG, a little, thin, pale, rapid-looking old woman with scraggly gray hair, a gray calico dress and a small woolen shawl over her shoulders. She walks across the stage and lights the lamp by the piano.

MRS. SHAEFER (*looking up from her crocheting*)
Has Magnet come in yet, Mrs. Littig?

MRS. LITTIG (*busy with the lamp-lighting*)
No, he ain't come in. (*She speaks in a mild, high, patient voice*)

MRS. SHAEFER
Where did he say he was going?

MRS. LITTIG
He didn't say. Most like he went to the cemetery.

MRS. SHAEFER
It's queer he wouldn't be back by now.

MRS. RICKERT
He might be at the depot to meet Ferguson's train. A quarter past seven he gets here. The crowds was thick already when I come up the street.

MRS. SHAEFER
To be sure, that's where he is. Are you gettin' somethin' to eat, Mrs. Littig? Magnet'll need a good hot bite in case he goes to the hall.

MRS. LITTIG
There's coffee made and ham and eggs ready to fry ef he'll eat.

MRS. RICKERT (*to MRS. LITTIG*)
Poor man, he ain't much appetite, I expect.

MRS. LITTIG
No, he don't eat very good.
(*When MRS. LITTIG has finished lighting the lamp, she walks to the coffin and stands, facing the audience, stroking her cheek and wiping her eyes now and then*

with her hand. She is disregarded by the others, who go on talking. After a moment or two she goes out by the dining room door.)

MRS. RICKERT
I understand he takes it terrible hard, Mrs. Shaefer. My Jim met him on the street last night, and he says to him: "Magnet," he says, "I'm sorry trouble should 'a' come to you of all men in this town just at this time," he says, "when so many looks to you for help." And with that Magnet just give him a nod and walked on without a word to say. Jim was tellin' me he had a terrible look on his face like he was near to lose his senses. "It was a bad day for the workers o' this town, Maggie," Jim says to me, "when Magnet's girl took sick. You want to remember," he says, "let the Tabitha run another week and this strike's lost; and run it will," he says, "as sure as I'm alive, without Magnet sticks on the job. Ferguson's a wonder," he says, "but he can't do everything alone. It's a shame for Magnet to draw out just now—there ain't nothin' ought to make him do it," he says.

MRS. SHAEFER
I heard say they got a message last night from Ferguson, one o' them secret telegrams. "The Tabitha walks out at noon Saturday," he says, "or the game's up. Drive them damn scabs"—that's what he says right in the telegram—"drive them damn scabs into Murray Hall at half past eight and look for me on the seven fifteen train. *Have Magnet there,*" he says.

(*A slight pause*)
Ferguson—ain't it surprising, now, what he's done in this town? Ain't he

got a terrible strong will? "He's a great man"—that's what Tim McGrath says to a crowd down there one night. "Talk about your kings and your emperors and your presidents and your millionaires," he says—"there ain't one of 'em all with the brains and the fists could stand up alone against Ferguson."

MRS. RICKERT

It's little Ferguson can do without others to help him. What do them nine-dollar-a-week scabs at the Tabitha know or care who Ferguson is? He can't talk no Eyetalian. He ain't never run a loom. It needs somebody can speak their own tongue and has lived in the same place and worked on the same job. Magnet's the man to talk to them men. Do you think he'll go to the meetin' tonight, Mrs. Shaefer?

MRS. SHAEFER

I don't know, I'm sure, Mrs. Rickert. I'm here to do what I can. "It's his duty," that's what my Joesays to me this mornin'—"it's his duty, and no man ain't got a right to go against his duty, no matter how black his trouble may be. Do you want we should 'a' starved and scraped ten weeks for nothin'?" he says. "Mill after mill will shut down," he says—"the Excelsior down a month since, the Maxwell down a fortnight this coming Wednesday, the Junta down three weeks past—My God, think o' that!" Joe says to me, "the Junta—that miserable pesthouse o' poor, chatterin' Dago apes that you wouldn't 'a' thought would 'a' ever knew the difference between a strike and a bunch of spaghetti; and here they are holdin' together like human men, and who's done it?" Joe says to me. "Why, old Magnet's done it. Ferguson never could 'a' brought this strike where it is today without Magnet to back him. When the Tabitha shuts down," he says, "we've got the best o' them bloodsuckers that's tryin' to live off our carcasses, an' there's only one man can put a little reason an' backbone into them cowardly sponges o' furren scabs, an' that man's Magnet. Magnet's in a bad place," he says, "with nobody but that one pore foolish old

woman"—(*She lowers her voice and motions toward the dining room door.*)—"to look after him. She'd 'a' been in the almshouse long ago ef it hadn't 'a' been for Magnet's good heart. She's nobody to put nerve into a man. Now for God's sake," Joe says to me, "you go down there tonight, Mamie, and see he gets a good meal an' turns up at the hall an' gives his talk accordin' to the timetable. It's a great pity," he says, "*for more reasons than one*, that Magnet's wife is no more alive. That house would 'a' been better this long time past for a good, strong woman in it," he says.

MRS. RICKERT

Seemed like he was terrible devoted to Mary.

MRS. SHAEFER

He made a great mistake to indulge her the way he did, Mrs. Rickert, a great mistake.

MRS. RICKERT

Seems queer she wouldn't 'a' got a man of her own before now—a bright, stylish girl like Mary. There was plenty courted her. They say as young Nick Blundy, that's foreman of the warpers and twisters down at the Waverly, was after her to marry him this long time.

MRS. SHAEFER (*severely*)

She would never 'a' been content to be a mill worker's wife—Mary Magnet wouldn't. She'd too many notions for that. It takes a hard jolt to bring some off their high horse. (*Significantly.*)

MRS. RICKERT (*leaning forward confidentially*)

Ain't it surprising now that she should 'a' gone so quick? A strong, lively girl like that—she did look the very picture of health. What did you understand was the cause of her sickness, Mrs. Shaefer? I heard say the doctors wasn't able to give any satisfaction whatever.

(*A sudden knock at the door intercepts the reply to this query.* MRS. RICKERT rocks in silence, while MRS. SHAEFER opens the door and admits NICK BLUNDY, a tall, good-looking young workingman in

THE SMART SET

a dark gray suit and flannel shirt. He carries a large pasteboard box under his arm, and enters nervously, quickly removing his soft felt hat.

MRS. SHAEFER (in a subdued voice and with great solemnity)

Good evening, Mr. Blundy. You come to view the corpse? (She makes an impressive gesture toward the coffin and resumes her seat. The rocking and crocheting continue, subdued in tone, while NICK stands for a moment or two by the coffin. The women glance furtively at him. When he moves MRS. SHAEFER speaks.)

MRS. SHAEFER

Won't you set down a minute, Mr. Blundy? (She places a chair to the left of MRS. RICKERT. NICK seats himself gingerly on the edge of the chair, propping his package against it and turning his hat in his hand. The women assume attitudes and expressions of renewed gravity and importance. MRS. RICKERT almost ceases to rock.)

NICK (in a subdued, nervous voice)

It's a terrible thing about Mary, ain't it?

(Appropriately lugubrious sighs and murmurs come from the women.)

WOMEN

It is indeed, Mr. Blundy. Terrible. Yes it's very sad.

NICK (after a slight pause)

Where's the old man?

MRS. SHAEFER

We're expectin' him in any minute.

NICK

They say he grieves very bitter.

MRS. SHAEFER

Yes, he takes on a good bit.

NICK

Ain't he goin' down to the hall to-night?

MRS. SHAEFER (with much gravity)

I can't say positive, Mr. Blundy. It's his duty to go. There's hopes he may be made to feel that.

NICK (spasmodically, after another slight pause)

I didn't know there was anything ailed Mary. I seed her only a week or two ago walkin' down Grant Street one night, and she says to me: "Nick," she says, "it's slow times these days, ain't it, with the girls and the fellows; but," she says, "what'll you bet when we win this strike we don't have more coin in our pockets than ever we did—and then for the good old Saturday nights!" Why, she was laughin' and carryin' on as lively as a kitten.

MRS. RICKERT (nodding)

She did enjoy a good time as much as any girl, Mary did.

NICK (shaking his head mournfully)

She must 'a' been took awful sudden. I heard she died Wednesday night down in the St. Francis? Is that right?

MRS. SHAEFER

Yes, Mr. Blundy, them's the facts.

NICK

Have you heard say what it was that ailed her?

(MRS. RICKERT stops rocking entirely and looks expectantly at MRS. SHAEFER, who draws herself up with portentous dignity.)

MRS. SHAEFER

She was took very sudden, and they had need to operate to cure her. There's great danger in them operations.

(A pause. MRS. RICKERT resumes rocking, folds her hands and looks wise. NICK gazes silently at the floor.)

(NICK sadly reflective)

She sure did have the ginger in her, that girl. There was few fellows could do with a loom what she could.

MRS. RICKERT

Mary was smart all right. I guess there ain't nobody questions that.

NICK (lost in his own recollections)

Why, I seed her one day on a bet run six looms, at onct—seventy picks to the inch, mind you—and not a snarl on one o'

them six machines. While we was standin' there watchin' the boss come by, and he says: "Mary Magnet," he says, "ef I could get the rest o' these chaps to work the way you kin work," he says, "I'd git a damn big raise to me wages," he says; and quick as a flash Mary says back: "Well, just because me and the boys kin make human shuttlecocks out o' ourselves, that ain't no reason why we're a goin' to do it," she says, "just to raise your pay. We know darn well we'd never raise our own," she says, all the time jumpin' around from one loom to another as springy as a cricket. *(A pause.)* Gee! *(He shakes his head.)* It sure is hard to believe she'd 'a' been took like this so soon.

(He fumbles after the box on the floor and lifts it to his knees, hesitates awkwardly and then removes the cover, displaying a white pillow of immortelles with the word "Asleep" formed upon it in large purple letters and tied across one corner with an elaborate bow of purple satin ribbon. There is a chorus of appreciative murmurs from the women. Mrs. SHAEFER rises and takes the box, holding it up to full view.)

MRS. SHAEFER

Now, ain't that a beautiful thing?

MRS. RICKERT

Oh, that is handsome!

MRS. SHAEFER

Wait till I fix it on the coffin. *(She walks across the room and props the pillow (which has a fixture for this purpose) on the lower half of the coffin which is closed, then backs away admiringly to get the effect. The others rise for the same purpose. At this moment the sound of shouts and band music, faintly audible outside in the distance for some few moments previous, becomes more distinct. Mrs. SHAEFER lifts her hand.)*

MRS. SHAEFER

It's Ferguson.

MRS. RICKERT

Yes, that's who it is. They're bringin' him up from the depot.

MRS. SHAEFER

Most like there'll be trouble with the police down here by the mill at the corner.

(A sudden loud knock comes. All walk toward the door, and Mrs. SHAEFER opens it, admitting TIMOTHY McGRATH, a stocky, sandy-haired, smooth-shaven man in a black suit with a striker's button and ribbon conspicuous in his buttonhole. At the sound of the knock Mrs. LITTIG creeps timidly in from the kitchen and stands in the background with one hand on the coffin.)

McGRATH *(standing in the doorway)*
Where's Magnet?

MRS. SHAEFER

He ain't come in yet.

MRS. RICKERT

Wasn't he at the depot?

McGRATH *(rapidly and excitedly)*

No, he was not, and Ferguson's been raisin' hell down there. "Where's Magnet?" he says the first thing he steps off the train. "Take away the band, take away the parade, take away that carriage," he says, "and get me Magnet. Why ain't Magnet here?" he says. "I told you to have Magnet here." Jack Flaven spoke up and says: "Mr. Ferguson, we done our best but we can't locate Magnet. You may not 'a' heard," he says, "but Magnet's had trouble. His girl's dead. He won't talk tonight," and Ferguson says: *(He lowers his voice.)* "I don't give a damn who's dead; I'll have no words with anybody till I've seen Magnet," he says. Can't none of you tell me where he is? When was he last home?

MRS. SHAEFER

I understand he ain't been home since noon, Mr. McGrath.

McGRATH

Well, for Christ's sake, any time he gets in send him down to the hall.

(NICK BLUNDY and McGRATH go out. Mrs. SHAEFER and Mrs. RICKERT re-

main standing just inside the open door. MRS. LITTIG moves aimlessly back and forth behind the coffin, her arms folded, gazing at the dead and now and then wiping her eyes. The band is now distinctly heard at the end of the street playing the "Marseillaise," and cheers, "Hurrah for Ferguson!" mingled with shouts.)

MRS. RICKERT (*pointing excitedly*)

There's Ferguson! See him there walkin' behind the band! Oh, he's a grand man! There ain't nothin' this town can do that's too good for Ferguson—that's what my Jim says.

(*They stand for a moment looking and listening, then close the outside door. MRS. LITTIG furtively leaves her stand by the coffin and starts toward the dining room door, but is intercepted by MRS. RICKERT, who crosses the stage and seats herself near MRS. SHAEFER, who has resumed her crocheting.*)

MRS. RICKERT

Mis' Littig, you was at the hospital when Mary died, wasn't you? I heard tell she suffered a good bit.

MRS. LITTIG (*turning reluctantly on her way to the door*)

She died very quiet, Mary did.

MRS. RICKERT (*persistently*)

Ain't you heard the doctors say what was the matter with her?

MRS. LITTIG

No, I ain't heard.

MRS. RICKERT

Ain't they told her father?

MRS. LITTIG

I ain't heard him say.

MRS. RICKERT

I heard tell Mary was to be married in the summer, Mrs. Littig. Is that a fact?

MRS. LITTIG

I ain't never heard Mary was to be married.

MRS. SHAEFER (*addressing MRS. RICKERT in a contemptuous whisper*)

She don't know nothin'.

(*Exit MRS. LITTIG by the dining room door. MRS. RICKERT looks around to make sure that she has gone, then draws her chair close to MRS. SHAEFER and whispers a question. The latter responds by a very slow and preternaturally solemn nodding of the head, accompanied by a sideward glance full of the direst meaning.*)

MRS. RICKERT

Oh, ain't that terrible now! (*Parenthetically.*) I had my suspicions! (*She leans forward eagerly and whispers another question.*)

MRS. SHAEFER (*very impressively*)

That I don't know, Mrs. Rickert. As far as I can make out there ain't nobody knows. "You can be sure o' one thing," Joe says to me this morning: "whoever it is, Magnet has still to learn his name. It's a short lease o' life for the man that wronged Mary Magnet once her father finds out the truth. That's what ails Magnet," Joe says to me. "*He can't find out.*" Ef somethin' don't happen to take his mind off it he'll brood hisself crazy."

MRS. RICKERT (*shaking her head and clicking her tongue*)

Tck! Tck, tck! It certainly is awful. Now whoever do you suppose?

MRS. SHAEFER

In my belief it's some rich fellow she met up to the city. Many a Saturday night when work was over she's been seen take the train. I understand she spread round the report she was goin' to business college up there. I guess, if truth be told, it was the gay life she was after.—Well, she's not the first girl foolishness has brought to her grave. (*She nods wisely.*) Them rich ones knows how to cover their tracks.

MRS. RICKERT

Ain't it a terrible shame now for a man like Magnet, a man as has worked hard and lived an honest life and everybody respects, that his girl should make

a common woman of herself and his name be made a shame in the town?

MRS. SHAEFER

There's very few knows the real truth, Mrs. Rickert. "Whatever you do, Mamie," Joe says to me, "*don't talk*. It would be a bad thing just at this time," he says, "if many was to get the straight of how Magnet's girl come to her death. I wouldn't want Ferguson to know of it," he says; "why, Ferguson thinks the sun rises and sets in old Magnet," he says.

MRS. RICKERT

Mary always did seem like a right well behaved, sensible girl, too—for all her free ways and smart talk. It's queer about them things.

MRS. SHAEFER

She looked too high, Mrs. Rickert—she looked too high. That's the way with them smart, good-lookin' girls. They ain't never content with enough. That's what I says to Joe this mornin'. "Now there was a girl," I says, "that wanted to own the earth." Why, I used to see her go down to work in the mornin', her head way up in the air, swingin' her arms and steppin' along as proud as a peacock. You might 'a' thought she was some fine lady instead of a mill girl. An' now look what she's come to. A bitter dose she's had to take for her pride.

(There is a sound of voices and footsteps on the porch outside. The women rise. The door opens and WILLIAM MAGNET enters. He is a tall, spare man of over fifty, with plentiful gray hair, dressed in a dark suit and flannel shirt. He is pale and harassed-looking, and almost savagely grim and abrupt in manner. He holds open the door, admitting TIMOTHY McGRATH.)

MAGNET *(abruptly, closing the door)*

Take a seat, Tim. I'll be with you in a minute. *(To MRS. SHAEFER, politely but sternly.)* What is there I can do for you, Mrs. Shaefer?

MRS. SHAEFER *(ingratiatingly)*

Put it the other way round, Mr. Magnet. Ain't there nothin' we can

do for you? That's what we're here for. Won't you come out in the kitchen and have a bite of somethin' before you talk to Mr. McGrath? It'll do you a sight o' good, Mr. Magnet. There's coffee right on the stove.

MAGNET *(maintaining his direct and forbidding manner)*

Thank you very kindly, but I ain't hungry just at present. There's one thing you *can* do, if you'll excuse my speaking very plain, Mrs. Shaefer.

MRS. SHAEFER *(somewhat awed)*

Well, now, what's that, Mr. Magnet?

MAGNET

You can leave me to myself for this evening if you'll be so kind. I'm willing those that wants to should come in during the daytime, but at nights it suits me better to be alone.

MRS. SHAEFER *(swelling with offended dignity)*

Why, certainly, Mr. Magnet, just as you say. I've no wish to thrust in my company anywhere I ain't wanted. *(She goes out promptly by the dining room door, followed by MRS. RICKERT. MAGNET, quite unmoved, draws up a chair and seats himself in front of McGRATH. He speaks restlessly, and with a harsh, detached manner.)*

MAGNET

Now, Tim, whatever you've got to say, make it as short as you can. This is no time and place to waste words. *(He motions vaguely toward the coffin.)* That ought to be plain.

McGRATH *(leaning forward and placing his hand on MAGNET'S knee)*

You have us all wrong, Magnet, if you think you ain't got our sympathy. You've got it. But, man alive—*(Straightening slightly and shaking both hands in front of him.)*—we can't stop tonight to think of our feelings. We gotta think of the proposition we're up against. Inside of an hour that hall down there'll be chock full o' workers from the Tabitha. We've sweat blood

to get 'em there. If they go back to work tomorrow morning this strike's on the blink. Who's goin' to hold that crowd, Magnet? Ferguson can't do it. He don't know the language.

MAGNET (*impatiently*)

What's the matter with Bruno Bastido? He can make a speech all right.

MCGRATH

They're jealous of Bastido. They think he's got a graft. Magnet, do you remember what you says to us down at the hotel that night last January when Ferguson first come to town? You says: "Boys, it ain't no use tryin' to stir up the warpers an' the twisters an' the loom workers—they're organized so tight already they can hardly move. If you want to see a real strike in this town, there's just one way to do it, and that is *stop the looms*. Begin at the bottom of the ladder and get the dyers and the weavers out. Stop wastin' your breath on these gentlemen of labor that's enjoyin' good union wages, and talk to them poor devils that's starved so long they don't know they're hungry. Get out them at the bottom and the others 'll follow fast enough."—Wasn't that the advice you give, Magnet?

MAGNET (*indifferently*)

I guess it was, Tim.

MCGRATH

Ain't we stuck pretty close to them tactics you proposed? Ain't that the way the Maxwell was shut down, an' the Junta? Wasn't you personally pretty much responsible for bringin' about them two walkouts?

MAGNET (*wearily*)

Well, suppose I was, Tim. What's that to do with it?

MCGRATH (*with renewed earnestness*)

Why, just this, Magnet. You got the men out, but there's some of the rest of us has had the devil's own time tryin' to *keep* 'em out. You know what the trouble is. Up to the middle o' last week we ain't never been able to get as

much as a look-in on the Tabitha. That rascally Vito Toccati they've got for a foreman up there has double-crossed us from the start. It's pretty hard on them poor devils from the Maxwell and the Junta that's livin' along from day to day on bread and potatoes from the relief station to see the Tabitha hands goin' to work an' know they're gettin' double pay and the promise of a big raise when the strike's over. They won't stick it out that way much longer. You can't put *too* big a strain on human nature. We've got to shut down the Tabitha. Why, Magnet, you was the first to say it. For two weeks we've kept a hundred pickets round that mill. It's been a grim game. Every day there's been as many as thirty out of the hundred arrested or sent to the hospital with a shot through the arm or a broken head, and every time the next morning we've had thirty new ones there to take their places. Well, we've made some progress. Out of the 425 that works in that mill there was only one hundred got through the picket lines this mornin'. But, my God, the fight's only just begun! We gotta get 'em *all* out an' we gotta *keep* 'em out. We gotta clinch this thing, and tonight's the time. Ferguson's come down a' purpose. If this meeting falls flat the whole strike may go for nothing. You wouldn't want that to happen, would you, Magnet? Don't you feel like you ought to come down and help us put it through?

(*A pause. MAGNET rises abruptly and faces MCGRATH squarely.*)

MAGNET

Well, now, Tim, if you've said your say and feel satisfied, you can have my answer. It's the same I give you before we come in a few minutes ago. I can't do what you want me to. (*Hastily, as MCGRATH starts to interrupt.*) At least, I *won't* do it. There's no more chance of my goin' down to Murray Hall tonight than there would be if it was me instead of my girl was lyin' in that coffin. Now that's all I have to say. I hope it's enough. I wish you'd go now and leave me to myself.

McGRATH
Do you mean that, Magnet?

MAGNET (*savagely*)
Do I mean it? O' course I mean it. Did you ever know me say anything I didn't mean? (*He turns his back.*)

McGRATH (*rising*)
Do you think you're doin' the square thing by Ferguson, Magnet? He's staked pretty heavy on you.

MAGNET (*desperately*)
Square or crooked, Tim, have it as you please. I ain't goin' down to Murray Hall tonight. And what's more, I ain't goin' to argue about it any further. Now I wish you'd go.

McGRATH (*shaking his head*)
I'm sorry about this, Magnet. I don't think you're doin' the thing that will give you the most satisfaction in the end.

(McGRATH goes out. MAGNET closes the door and stands for a moment stretching his arms back and forth with a weary movement of mental suffering and physical exhaustion. He walks to the coffin for a moment, shakes his head, moans a little and swears under his breath, then sinks into a rocking chair near the table, stretches out his feet, throws back his head, closes his eyes and lets his hands rest limply one above the other in an attitude of utter weariness and dejection. MRS. LITTIG looks in from the dining room, retreats for a moment, and then reappears, carrying a pair of shoes, which she places on the floor beside him. He stirs a little, but otherwise pays no attention. MRS. LITTIG returns to the kitchen and brings back a large bottle, cup and spoon. She pours from the bottle into the cup and touches MAGNET on the arm.)

MRS. LITTIG
Take a sup o' this.

MAGNET (*rousing*)
What is it?

MRS. LITTIG
It's hot spirits and Jamaicy ginger.

MAGNET (*motioning her away impatiently*)
No, no. I don't want it.

(MRS. LITTIG places the cup on the table near him and starts toward the door.)

MAGNET (*moving uneasily*)
Mis' Littig!

(MRS. LITTIG turns and walks slowly back.)

MAGNET
Mis' Littig! Come set here a minute. I want to ask you somethin'.

(MRS. LITTIG seats herself in a nearby chair and rocks timidly with folded arms. MAGNET, with eyes still closed, twists about in great distress.) What did you say was the last thing Mary said to you?

MRS. LITTIG
She says: "Tell pap it's all right. Tell him he ain't to worry."

MAGNET
Didn't she never leave a message for anybody else?

MRS. LITTIG
Not as I heard.

MAGNET
That night you was settin' by her when her fever was so high—Ain't she never mentioned anybody's name?

MRS. LITTIG (*shaking her head*)
No, she ain't.

MAGNET
Didn't you never hear the nurse or the doctor say there was somebody she was talkin' about?

MRS. LITTIG
No, I didn't hear.

MAGNET (*reaching shakily over to the table for the cup and taking a long drink, then replacing the cup on the table and slowly beginning to unlace his boots and put on dry ones*)

What ever become o' that ring Mary used to wear?

MRS. LITTIG
What ring?

MAGNET
Why, that gold ring with a little blue stone in it. You've seed her wear it. She told me she bought it out of her savings. It ain't on her finger now. What become of it?

MRS. LITTIG
I dunno, Mr. Magnet. I never noticed what she done with it.

MAGNET
I was upstairs this mornin' lookin' through all her things, and I couldn't find it. It ain't on her finger now. *(A pause.)* Them times last winter, Mrs. Littig, when Mary went up to the city so often, didn't she ever tell you nothing about where she went and what she done?

MRS. LITTIG *(reflectively)*
She wasn't ever much to tell.

MAGNET
Can't you recall she ever mentioned anybody she met up there, anybody that took her round and acted nice to her?

MRS. LITTIG *(mildly)*
Don't seem like I can remember she ever did.

(A pause. MRS. LITTIG rises, takes the bottle and cup from the table and moves toward the kitchen. She turns as she reaches the dining room door.) Mebbe you would eat a little after a while. I got some supper in the stove. *(She goes out.)*

MAGNET *(groaning despairingly and turning in his chair)*

Her mother would 'a' knew! Her mother would 'a' knew!

(There is a knock. MAGNET does not move.) Somebody else after me, damn it! Why can't they leave me alone? *(The knock is repeated. MAGNET rises and goes savagely toward the door.)* I'll teach 'em to stay out o' here for one night!

(He opens and admits JOHN FERGUSON

—a large man, tall, heavily built, smooth-shaven. He enters in silence. MAGNET succumbs a little under his steady eye.)

Oh, why, good evening, Mr. Ferguson, good evening.

(He holds out his hand, which FERGUSON takes silently.)

FERGUSON
I'm sorry to find you in trouble, Magnet.

MAGNET *(walking toward the opposite side of the room. For the first time he speaks a little tremulously)*

Yes, I'm in a bad way, Mr. Ferguson, a bad way. It's my girl, Mary. *(He motions toward the coffin.)* She's all I had.

(While MAGNET's back is turned, FERGUSON glances swiftly about the room and in the direction of the open coffin with a look that is peculiarly painful, apprehensive and significant. Then he walks toward MAGNET and puts a hand on his shoulder.)

FERGUSON
I know you've had a hard blow, Magnet, but there's only one way to meet it. Pull yourself together. You have work to do. You're lucky there. Not every man has that comfort in his trouble.

MAGNET *(half turning away)*
It don't seem like I can take any comfort from that, Mr. Ferguson. I'd be glad to if I could. I wish I could talk to the boys tonight. I can't do it. I can't do nothing for a while but set here an' think. I can't believe Mary's gone. I can't get used to it. She was all I had. I'd better be dead myself. *(Passionately.)* My God, I wish I was!

FERGUSON *(very quiet and repressed)*
That's no thought for you to hold tonight, Magnet. If a man's no good to the world and he knows it, let him get out of it if he wants to. It don't stand that way with you. You've got a big responsibility. Why don't you be worthy of it? Why don't you stand up to it?

MAGNET
I can't think about that now, Mr. Ferguson. The way I see it I've got a

right to be left alone with my own trouble. It's a privilege belongs to any man if he's a mind to claim it.

FERGUSON (*with sudden intensity*)

Let me tell you, Magnet, it's a privilege no man ought to want to claim at the expense of fourteen thousand of his fellow workers. Things have got to a crisis, and you've had as much to do with that as anybody. If we can close out the Tabitha tomorrow and hold down it and the other mills till the end of next week, we're over the danger line. If we can't, we lose as sure as fate. If we lose, it'll take years, years—you know that, Magnet—to win back what we've gained. The outcome o' this strike don't rest on High, Magnet—(*he makes a sardonic upward gesture*)—it rests right here in this room with you and me. (*He pounds his fist softly on the table.*) Now what are you going to do about it?

(MAGNET *shakes his head doubtfully.*)

FERGUSON *continues.*)

You want to remember how much depends on a big fight like this. What made the workers of this town listen to me when I landed here? It was because they knew I'd won a miners' strike out in Montana and a lumber jacks' strike in Oregon and a cotton workers' strike in North Carolina and a glass blowers' strike in New Jersey. They thought if I'd helped others to better wages and shorter hours I could help them. If we lose here, the next town where I go they won't be quite so ready to listen, now will they? To every big strike lost there's a hundred others lost in future. I've been holding off from this town a long time. I thought they weren't ripe for it. I looked over the ground a good while before I made up my mind. Do you want to know what was the chief thing made me decide to come here this winter and stick it out? It was because I found you here. When I heard you talk to that crowd outside the Excelsior one night last year, I said to myself: "When the time comes, there's a man I can depend on." Well, I have depended on you. You don't want to give me cause to regret that, do you, Magnet? If it hadn't been

for you things here could never have come to a head the way they have. You know that. It's no time for you to desert me now. You can't do more to prove your sorrow than to meet it the way a man ought. Come on down to the hall, Magnet. The boys are waiting.

MAGNET (*painfully, after a pause*)

I'm sorry. I can't do it, Ferguson.

FERGUSON

Why can't you do it?

MAGNET (*moving away a little distance and speaking with great feeling*)

You're a big man, Ferguson. You've got a big mind. You've got a big power. You know how to fight, and you know how to put fight into other men. You put it into me. I shan't ever forget the day you come into this God-forsaken town. It give me a feeling I ain't had for a good many years—a feeling I'd clean forgot I ever could have. Well—I followed it. I've fought for you, Ferguson, every day and every night for these past two months, and I'd 'a' fought for you to the end for better or for worse if it hadn't been for this. There's something, Ferguson, a man's mind don't seem to have no power to make him understand. He's got to 'a' been there himself. You ain't got no children of your own, Ferguson. You can't understand there's some troubles comes first with a man. The whole world might be waiting for him to save it, but it'd have to wait. Nobody wouldn't have any right to interfere. You don't know what it is to a man, Ferguson, when somebody—when somebody—

(MAGNET'S *voice breaks. He pauses and looks about hopelessly as if driven into a corner. Then, with a sudden, desperate gesture, he breaks out fiercely.*)

Damn it, there's some rotten coward, some beast, some low down scoundrel has ruined my girl! I don't know who he is. But I want to know! I want to find out! I want to find him! I want to kill him! It's the only thing I do want. Until I've done that, this strike can go to hell. You can go to hell. They all can go to hell.

(He drops into a chair and covers his face with his hands. FERGUSON watches him steadily in silence, then as he quiets a little begins to pace up and down.)

FERGUSON

This man you say has done your girl so much harm—how to you know but what she loved him?

MAGNET *(in a savage tone, looking up swiftly)*

Loved him! Loved him! The damn dog! Suppose she *did* love him! What's that to do with it?

FERGUSON *(very quietly, still pacing up and down and looking at the floor)*

A whole lot. No man ever lived that ruined the woman that loved him. It can't be done.

(There is such deep conviction in FERGUSON'S tone that MAGNET gazes at him in silent astonishment. FERGUSON seats himself slowly, remaining silent a minute.)

There's something I might as well tell you, Magnet, if you have a mind to listen.

(A long pause follows, FERGUSON gazing at the floor. Then he speaks in a low voice.)

You're not the only man in this town tonight whose hopes are lying in a coffin.

MAGNET *(startled, looking closely at FERGUSON)*

You? *(FERGUSON nods.)* Somebody close?

FERGUSON

Yes, somebody close.

MAGNET

Dead?

FERGUSON *(heavily)*

Yes, dead.

MAGNET *(after a pause, drawing closer)*

It ain't your wife?

FERGUSON

No, not my wife. *(He moves restlessly, and speaks, after a pause, in a changed tone.)* It's been some time since your girl's mother died, Magnet—isn't that so?

MAGNET

Fifteen years.

FERGUSON

I suppose you and she lived happy together, didn't you?

MAGNET *(solemnly)*

We did that.

FERGUSON

Well—I wasn't so lucky. My wife and I haven't lived together at all this many a day. If we had I'd never be here in a loom worker's cottage, fighting within an inch of my life to win a strike. I'd be sitting in some hotel parlor hobnobbing with a lot of bishops and politicians and college professors, trying to patch up a peace between the mill owners and the strikers. I'd wear a medal and have a good fat bank account. I'd kowtow to ladies and gentlemen. They wouldn't hate me the way they do now—they'd only snub me. I wouldn't stick out my tongue at the minister. When I drank champagne and ate at swell restaurants I'd do it on the quiet. The newspapers wouldn't hound me—they'd praise me. I wouldn't be a scoundrel, an anarchist, a cut-throat revolutionist. I'd be a respectable labor leader—that's what I'd be if I'd stayed with my wife. Maybe you think I'd better have stayed with her. *(He laughs sneeringly.)* There's plenty would agree with you in that opinion.

(MAGNET makes a protesting gesture, but FERGUSON pays no attention.)

Well, I didn't stay with her, I left her. A good living is all she gets out of me. It's all sheever will get. Except my name. She hangs on to that. And my freedom. She's got that locked up safe enough, or she thinks she has. She claims I'm not good enough to marry any other woman. *(He laughs cynically.)* Maybe she's right about that. But I was good enough for another woman to love me just the same. *(With a touch of boyish pride.)*

She did love me anyhow, this other woman, whether I was good enough or not. She didn't get a living out of me. She didn't get my name. She didn't get a right to blame me if I was unfaith-

ful to her—and I wasn't always faithful to her. She didn't even get a right to tell anybody she loved me, and it seems like that's what a woman hankers after the most of all. I never told her I loved her. She just had a sort of an idea I was glad she loved me. I was glad—for a kind of a queer reason. She kept me from feeling lonely. I'll say that for her—she was the only human being I've ever known that could stand between me and mortal loneliness. Maybe that means I loved her. I don't know. I don't suppose I did. *(A pause.)*

Well, tonight, just before I took the train to come down here, I heard that woman was dead. I didn't enjoy the trip down so very much.

(There is so much suppressed suffering in his voice that MAGNET instinctively reaches forward and lays a hand on his shoulder. FERGUSON shakes it off, rises and faces MAGNET.)

You said to me I don't know how it feels to be a father. You're right about that, Magnet, dead right. I don't know. Being the kind of man I am, nobody seems to think I'm entitled to any connection with a family. A courtroom or a jail cell is supposed to be the place where my disposition thrives to the best advantage. The only kind of a father I've ever had a chance to be you wouldn't call a father at all. You'd call him a beast, a low-down scoundrel, a man that ruins other men's daughters. Since my mother died, when I was a ten-year-old kid working on the bunkers in a coal mine out in Colorado, I've never known but one home, and that's in a dead woman's heart. I'm alone now and likely to stay so. I haven't any more hope of happiness in this world than I have of going to heaven when I die, and that's none at all.

(With sudden, passionate emphasis)

But there's one thing I don't ever forget, Magnet—unhappiness is a lot easier to bear when you've got clothes to cover your back and food enough to hold your body and soul together. When I come to a town in the dead of winter and find twenty-five thousand people on the edge of freezing and starvation, I remember the time when my own

mother went cold and hungry, and it don't seem to make very much difference to me whether I'm happy or not.

(He takes up his hat as if to leave, and moves a little toward the door.)

As long as I can keep alive to fight for those poor devils, I'll fight for 'em. There was a while I expected others to feel the same way, but I've got over that. Nobody knows any better than I do how few men you're likely to run across in a lifetime that'll join the ranks to stay. I used to take it pretty hard when an old comrade fell out, but it don't make so much difference any more. I've swallowed that kind of a disappointment with my daily bread for so many years now that it's got to be a pretty old story. There's one thing that always helps me to stand it. If there's nobody else in this world I can count on, I know I can always count on myself. As long as there's breath in my body I'll never lose heart and I'll never give up the game. A good part of the world seems to look on me as a kind of a devil. Well, if that's the way they feel about it, let 'em think so. I don't mind being the kind of an individual that can walk through hell without being scorched any so's you'd notice it. Life can kill and bury my happiness, but it can't kill and bury my courage. This strike that's on in this town is the biggest I've ever handled. Without you to help me, Magnet, maybe I'll lose it. Or maybe I won't lose it. Maybe I'll win it anyhow. This night may mean the beginning of the end for me or it may mean the beginning of the biggest success I've ever known. But whichever way it is, you can be sure of one thing—if ever I go down it'll be with every man's hand against me and my back shoved up against a hard high wall.

(There is a knock. FERGUSON opens the door and McGRATH steps just inside.)

McGRATH

Are you ready, Mr. Ferguson? Time's getting short.

FERGUSON

All ready, McGrath.

THE SMART SET

MAGNET (*rising suddenly*)

Hold on there a minute, Tim. (*He walks to the dining room door and calls to Mrs. LITTIG.*) You needn't set the table till I get back, Mrs. Littig. I'm going down to the hall. (*He takes his hat and walks to the door.*)

FERGUSON

You take the machine and go on over, boys. I want to walk. I'll be with you in a few minutes.

(MAGNET and McGRATH go out. FERGUSON closes the door and leans against it, raising his head and laying one hand across his mouth. As he stands there, Mrs. LITTIG enters hesitatingly, looking

about to make sure MAGNET has gone. She walks over to FERGUSON, and standing before him, pulls from the neck of her dress a long ribbon and from it unties a gold ring which she hands to FERGUSON. She looks at him sadly and timidly but simply and quile without reproach.)

Mrs. LITTIG

She said I was to give you this. She said I was to say she died happy.

(Without waiting for comment or reply, Mrs. LITTIG leaves the room by the dining room door. FERGUSON slips the ring in his vest pocket and walks slowly to the coffin. He stands behind it and looks down.)

CURTAIN



LOVE

By Skipwith Cannell

I WILL fling the coinage of my days

Clanking upon the counter:

"Give me my day's worth of frenzy,"

I will shout to the weigher of goods.

"My days are silver

And my months are pure gold;

Give me the worth of my coinage,"

I will shout to him.

"There are twenty-eight silver days in a golden month

But the banker keeps four of them for his trafficking.

He puts kisses in her hand:

A kiss at the end,

A kiss at the beginning,

To pay me for the loss of them."



AN amateur can start a love affair with a woman, but it takes a connoisseur to break one off.



CHARMING—Tempting and enticing; apparently not impossible.

LE DAHLIA BLEU

Par Arthur Doulliac

UN de mes amis et de nos plus jeunes colonels déclarait à son fils, hésitant à embrasser sa carrière;

—Tu seras officier ou épicier.

Mon père me répétait sur le même ton:

—Tu seras artilleur ou horticulteur.

Il n'avait cependant jamais été militaire, mais simple officier ministériel: il avait l'amour de l'uniforme et plaçait l'épée fort au-dessus de la plume; seule la passion des fleurs luttait chez lui avec celle de la graine d'épinards et peut-être le pacifique saint Fiacre l'eût-il emporté sur le belliqueux dieu Mars sans notre cousin Benjamin.

Il y a comme cela dans les familles le type de celui qui fait son chemin, qui, professeur, négociant ou soldat, réalise l'idéal des parents et est proposé pour modèle à toute leur progéniture.

Le cousin Benjamin tenait ce rôle à la maison. Fils d'un conducteur des ponts et chaussées, il était passé par Polytechnique et était alors colonel d'artillerie, à la veille de décrocher les étoiles.

C'était le sort auquel j'étais destiné, je n'avais qu'à suivre son exemple et dix fois le jour mon père le proposait à mon admiration juvénile; aussi était-il devenu ma bête noire.

Du reste je pouvais dire pour mon excuse:

—J'tiens ça d'maman.

Douce et excellente créature entre toutes, elle ne pouvait pas souffrir le malencontreux guerrier et ne prononçait son nom qu'avec une sorte de crainte superstitieuse, tel un génie malfaisant dont on redoute l'influence néfaste.

Compagnons de jeunesse et de plaisir, mon père et lui s'étaient jurés de ne jamais se marier et l'un d'eux n'avait

pas tenu son serment, les beaux yeux de ma chère mère le lui ayant fait oublier.

Original et quelque peu absolu, l'autre ne lui avait jamais pardonné ce qu'il appelait sa félonie; il avait refusé d'être son garçon d'honneur, même d'assister à sa noce; il n'avait jamais voulu voir ni sa femme ni ses enfants. Lorsque, profitant d'un congé, il venait à Paris où nous habitions alors, il envoyait un petit mot à mon père, l'invitant à dîner avec lui en garçon, mais jamais il n'avait consenti à passer notre porte et nous ne connaissions même pas sa figure, mystère qui ajoutait encore à son prestige.

Certain soir de grande hardiesse, le rendez-vous était Place des Victoires, ma sœur aînée m'y entraîna subrepticement et, blottis derrière la statue du Roi-Soleil, nous aperçûmes de loin une redingote boutonnée jusqu'au col, une rosette rouge, une moustache blanche. . . Ce fut tout! et nous nous saubâmes par la rue Vide-Gousset, épouvantés de notre audace.

Au fond, ce brave colonel était peut-être le meilleur des hommes, mais chaque fois que j'étais dernier en calcul (ce qui m'arrivait souvent) mon père fronçant les sourcils, répétait indigné:

—Que dirait le cousin Benjamin?

Il n'en faut pas tant pour vous faire prendre en grippe!

Je n'avais rien d'un mathématicien, et la perspective de Polytechnique n'était pas pour me réjouir, bien qu'ayant encore des notions vagues sur la célèbre école.

J'aurais certes préféré continuer à dire la messe, ma distraction favorite à laquelle je me livrais devant un autel en miniature avec une chemise de nuit à

maman, en guise de surplis, et une vieille calotte à papa en guise de barette.

— Quel gentil petit curé ce serait! murmurait ma chère mère dont c'était le rêve secret.

Mais avant même que j'eusse fait ma première communion, elle était remontée au ciel et mon sort ne dépendait plus que de mon père... et du cousin Benjamin.

* * *

Je faisais ma rhétorique au lycée de Saint-Quentin où mon père, malade, s'était retiré dans l'ancienne maison de sa mère, près du pont de Grès, partageant son temps entre la culture de son jardin et en particulier de ses dahlias (dont il prétendait avoir une collection unique!) et celle de mon esprit qui, hélas! lui donnait moins de satisfactions.

Tant qu'il s'agissait de traduire Horace et Virgile, d'expliquer Racine ou Corneille, d'élucider quelque point historique, ça allait bien: mais quand il fallait aborder théorèmes et racines carrées, je m'embourbais complètement... et polytechnique qui m'attendait.

L'amitié des deux cousins s'était encore resserrée depuis la mort de ma mère, mais ils se voyaient rarement, mon père ayant quitté Paris pour sa ville natale "qui n'avait pas même de garnison!" écrivait le colonel avec mépris.

Cependant, il n'en pesait pas moins sur mon existence, et j'avoue que lors de la campagne de Chine, je fis des vœux assez peu chrétiens pour que l'on fit donner souvent l'artillerie!

L'artillerie donna, mais mon persécuteur n'y gagna qu'un grade de plus et revint en France avec les étoiles.

Général!

— Hein tu vois où tu peux arriver!

Ce que j'entendais ce maudit refrain!

Un jour, jour inoubliable, en rentrant du lycée, je trouvai mon cher père radieux, épanoui...

Deux joies pour une!

Le héros de Crimée et de Palikao s'annonçait à dîner pour le lendemain, et le dahlia bleu venait de montrer ses premières pousses.

— Le dahlia bleu!

Oui, mon fils, le dahlia bleu! !

Ce dahlia bleu avait toute une histoire:

Mon père, dans sa passion horticole, ne se bornait pas à acheter des espèces rares à des jardiniers plus ou moins consciencieux; il s'adressait à tout le monde et de malins compères exploitaient sans vergogne cette douce manie pour lui vendre très cher de vulgaires tubercules amoureuxment cultivés, d'où espoir, déception, colères reproches à faire trembler la maison.

Il honorait d'une confiance particulière certain vieux chemineau, hâbleur et madré, qui avait toujours dans son bissac de soi-disant merveilles botaniques.

Ayant amorcé son crédule client par deux ou trois petits succès, il pouvait maintenant tout se permettre. Il lui avait déjà vendu un prix fabuleux une rose verte qui, sans doute, aurait été hideuse si le rosier n'était mort avant sa floraison.

— C'est bien malheureux, car il était quasiment unique! mais vot' terrain n'est point favorable.

Et mon père avalait ces bourdes! Les collectionneurs ont de ces naïvetés.

Cette année il lui avait apporté le dahlia bleu "comme compensation!"

C'était paraît-il un ancien jardinier de la Malmaison qui avait cultivé et mené à bien ce phénomène:

— Un dahlia bleu comme le manteau de la bonne Vierge, M'sieur Victorice! et velouté! et gros! Ce sera le roi de vot' collection!

A moins qu'il ne meure comme votre fameux rosier!

— Ah! pour un malheur, c'était un vrai malheur! Mais on a point deux fois la mauvaise chance.

— Non, décidément, je n'ai pas confiance.

— Comme vous voudrez! M'sieur Berger qui me d'mande toujours des raretés...

— Peuh! Berger! est-ce qu'il s'y connaît?...

C'était un amateur rival et les haines de collectionneurs l'emportent encore sur les haines d'amoureux.

Le vieux renard le savait bien et l'effet ne manquait jamais.

Et le dahlia bleu payé son pesant d'or alla remplacer le rosier vert.

Longtemps on put croire qu'il aurait, le même sort:

Tous ses confrères rouges, jaunes blancs, panachés, simples, doubles, etc., montraient leur tige, puis leurs boutons, puis leurs fleurs, et sa place demeurerait nette. Aussi son propriétaire entraînait-il dans des rages indescriptibles, montrant le poing à ce vieux filou!

Ah! s'il repassait à cette heure!

Mais il n'avait garde, laissant passer l'hiver là dessus et calmer les indignations de ses dupes.

Et le dahlia bleu venait de lever!

—Je l'appellerai le Général, Benjamin sera son parrain. Nous boirons le champagne en leur honneur à tous deux.

C'était ce qui m'intéressait le plus. . . Eh bien! non, il faut être franc! Si je m'inquiétais assez peu du fameux dahlia, j'étais fort curieux de connaître enfin l'auteur responsable de mes tribulations, celui dont l'influence néfaste me condamnait à pâlir sur la table des logarithmes et j'étais à la fois impatient et inquiet, car cette entrevue devait être décisive, mon père m'ayant dit avec une gravité nuancée de quelque tristesse (il avait une maladie de cœur et se savait condamné, pauvre père!):

—Vois-tu, mon fils, si je venais à disparaître, le général me remplacerait près de toi et j'espère que tu lui ferais honneur pour l'amour de moi.

Très ému, j'avais promis de faire de mon mieux; mais était-ce le chagrin, l'appréhension, ou toute autre cause!

La classe de mathématiques, qui tombait justement ce jour-là, se ressentit de mes fréquentes distractions, et je brillais encore moins qu'à l'ordinaire.

Je rentra l'oreille basse; mon père était au jardin, mais seul, en contemplation devant son dahlia bleu naissant.

—Oui, tu grandiras, tu t'épanouiras en fleur d'azur, pour confondre les méchants et les sots, grommelait-il.

Etonné, je questionnai:

—Et le général, papa?

Ses gros sourcils se froncèrent, et d'une voix terrible:

—Que l'on ne me parle plus du général! . . .

Le général s'était permis de blaguer le dahlia bleu et la crédulité de son propriétaire qu'il avait irrévérencieusement traité de jobard.

Ce que c'est que de nous! Mon père qui aimait tendrement ma sainte mère, n'avait jamais voulu lui sacrifier son cousin et, pour une fleur, ils s'étaient brouillés irrévocablement.

Irrévocablement! car si le général avait eu tort, mon père lui eût peut-être pardonné en le forçant à faire amende honorable devant le dahlia azuré, mais hélas! c'était un dahlia écarlate!

Mon père l'arracha de colère; je le replantai tant bien que mal dans mon petit jardin. . . Pensez donc! grâce à lui j'étais délivré de mon cauchemar! . . .

Mon père mourut sans s'être réconcilié avec le cousin Benjamin, alors au Mexique. Je ne le vis jamais et ma tutelle passa en d'autres mains.

Voilà comment je ne devins pas polytechnicien . . . grâce à un dahlia bleu!



DANS le cortège des peurs, des faiblesses humaines, le croyant représente la force calme, opiniâtre devant laquelle aucun but ne se dérobe. Sur les tatonnements de nos ténèbres il projette magnifiquement le flambeau de sa certitude.



LA forme de notre sensibilité détient le secret de nos destins.

THE RAINBOW CHASER

By Kenneth Rand

I'VE followed my restless heart
To the uttermost ends of earth—
New stars arise in alien skies,
Yet what is my roving worth?
Have I wasted my wealth of years
In a profitless wayside mart,
And garnered a crop of rue and tears
From heritage seeds of dearth?
Aye, the way is over-long,
And the road is ever new—
It may be right or it may be wrong
And my love be false or true—
So long as the rainbow hold,
And its glittering arch extend,
I'm off for the pot of fairy gold
On a road without an end!

*On a road without an end—
Though Fate be harsh or kind—
Ah, Love may sleep and eyes may weep,
But we've left the world behind!*

I've followed my fleeting love
From the east to the luring west,
And north and south through flood and drouth
I've carried my soul's unrest.
Have I bartered my house and home,
And my hopes of Heaven above,
For a castle built of fairy foam
And a maiden's merry jest?
Aye, my palace of a dream
May be over far away—
Ye know, who follow the rainbow gleam,
How dear is the price ye pay!
Ye know, and yet ever bold,
Wherever the trail may trend,
Ye're off for the pot of fairy gold
On a road without an end!

*On a road without an end—
With never a goal to find—
Ah, Love may die and so may I,
But we've left the world behind!*

ON THE TRAIL OF A THOUSAND GIRLS

By George Jean Nathan

FIRSTLY, it has ever been my opinion that, given a dozen girls of sufficiently luscious contour and savory visage, anyone—even George V. Hobart—can write a successful music show. And secondly, this being true, it has ever struck me that it amounts to a wanton pillage of precious time to go to the theater to review the average music show when one may accomplish the appraisal in twenty minutes or less from a table in the public eating and drinking place infringed upon after the play by the grisettes of the chorus. Thus, at eleven thirty of any night during the season, one may pass intelligently upon most New York musical shows at the resort that happens to be conducted at the moment by the son of the House of Rector, just as an excellent critical estimate may regularly be obtained in London at the Savoy or nearby Romano's, in Berlin at the *bierstuben* in the Jägerstrasse and the spacious *weinkeller* in the Friedrichstrasse, in Vienna at the Réclame and at the little places off the Kärntnerstrasse and down toward the Stefansplatz, and in Paris at any one of four or five haunts scattered around the region of the Champs Elysées and that part of the boulevard that glides downhill toward the Rue Richer.

Save, possibly, in Germany and with a few exceptions in the United States, England, Austria and France, the governing principle of the music show stage as an institution amounts to little more than the substitution of a two-dollar admission ticket for the round of drinks and a union orchestra for the colored professor. Otherwise, save for the in-

ferior quality of its music and, particularly, its wit, it is much the same as its franker, more honest prototype. In the light of these things, the current assumption that one must sit through two and one-half hours of is-your-brother-still-alive-no-he-lives-in-Philadelphia in order accurately to gauge one of these exhibits, is evidently a blood relative of the equally popular supposition that a dramatic critic is a man who is a dramatic critic on a newspaper. Granting, as grant one readily must, that music shows have nothing whatever in common with the arts; that they are, on the reverse, mere spectacular girl markets, exchanges and trading stations—which of the two following reports of one of these shows is the more logical and practical, the more beneficial and desirable to the public, the performers themselves and the manager? Which—the present standard newspaper form or the suggested new form?

PRESENT STANDARD NEWSPAPER FORM

"The Frolicsome Princess," a new musical comedy by Harry B. Smith and A. Baldwin Sloane, produced last night at the — Theater, relates, in two acts and three beautifully painted scenic pictures (one showing an old windmill in action), the romance of beautiful Princess Paula, of the imaginary province of Saxonburgovia, and the socialistic Duke Rasilaue. Paula, in order to win the recalcitrant Rasilaue, disguises herself as a peasant girl, meets Rasilaue at the mineral springs and captivates him. Rasilaue learns Paula's identity from Emil Donnerwurst, a stranded German pinochle player, and spurns her. In the end, however, all ends happily for the lovers. The lines given the character of the pinochle player are especially clever, as, for instance: "A bird in the hand is worth two in Bushwick" and "All's swell that ends swell."

Donnerwurst's clever catch phrase, repeated frequently, "I'm a son of a gun, by Looie!" took the house by storm. The best song numbers were "All for You and You for Me," "When the August Moon Plays Ping-Pong with the Leaves in Central Park" (during the rendition of which real ping-pong balls were thrown at the audience by the chorus) and "The Smoky-Moky-Hokey-Pokey Rag" (the latter an interpolated number by Irving Berlin). The play has been gorgeously staged by Mr. Fred Latham, the staging of one number in particular—the ping-pong song—displaying great originality and wit. The company includes, etc.

SUGGESTED NEW FORM

"The Frolicsome Princess," produced last night at the — Theater, promises to be a huge success for the following reasons:

Lillian Lewis* — *at* 18; weight 125; height 5 feet 1 inch; shape, excellent; blonde; said to be jolly and fond of motoring and dancing; mother and father dead.

Hazel Touraine** — *at* 19; weight 120; height 5 feet; shape, superb; brunette; said to be of quiet disposition yet *très sympathique*.

Angie Arborea*** — *at* 23; weight 142; height 5 feet 4 inches; shape ravishing; coloring, medium; said to be full of life and a clever conversationalist; divorcee.

Mae St. Cloud† — *at* 19; weight 127; height 5 feet 1½ inches; shape, trim; blonde; hair when let down touches floor; "good sport"; not averse to brokers.

Beatrice Verrill†† — *at* 20; weight 125; height 5 feet 3 inches; shape, magnificent; brunette; said to be of merry nature; has expensive studio apartment in Central Park West; father dead, mother an opaque washerwoman.

These five specimens are sufficient to indicate the excellent quality of the new show. There are, moreover, fourteen other equally meritorious elements in the persons of Jessica Hughes, Sallie Salome, Molly Van Sittart, Olive Tremaine (blondes); Mazie Reynolds, Dolly Anderson, Evelyn Hidalgo, Desirée Dartmoor, Billie Marthwell, Mame Maupassant, Phyllis Frane (brunettes); and Alys James, Trixie French and Violet Rosenberg (mediums).

*200 West 45th Street.

**179 West 53rd Street.

***Hotel Lewellyn.

†Marceaux Apartments.

††No. 82.

Take the American case, for example. In one of the most notorious of the native girl show ménages, the girls' salaries are graded in proportion to the girls' individual ability to tease their male hunters back into the playhouse night after night. Three widely seen music shows produced during the last

season and a half were the result of pools formed by outsiders with money, either for the purpose of promulgating or assuaging their own particular lady friends or giving their numerous theater-going masculine cronies a chance behind the scenes. Two recent girl shows were financed by Wall Street brokers for Wall Street brokers. One metropolitan music show institution extends the privilege of its stage door to its regular patrons; and in the case of another girl house, the copious list of the favorites who may be passed by the stage door keeper is headed by the names of a United States ambassador, a former district attorney, a judge, a power in the financial world, a celebrated politician, a steel magnate and one of the leading and most efficient of New York lawyers. The music show of to-day, with its public dancing girls, is to our more hypocritical and timid civilization what the private dancing girls were to Rome in the hours of her golden, blatant glory.

Why seek to treat such sport (albeit mayhap, a legitimate one) from the standpoint of something it is not?

I have recently returned from a pilgrimage among the girl shows of Europe, from among the Phyllises and Dorises of London, the Mizzis and Ilkas of Vienna, the Luciennes and Suzannes of Paris, the Hedwigs and Emmys of Berlin—tens of of them, twenties of them, hundreds, thousands, an orgy of girl, a glossary of girl. Eyes like the chord *c#f g#* pianissimo; eyes like platinum scarfpins. Hair as wonderfully golden as the boiled sauerkraut of Stuttgart; hair as marvelously brown and soft as the drawn ale at the Sign of the Cock in Fleet Street. Figures, in fifties, as lithe as rubber garden hose at the first quivering shoot of water; figures, in hundreds, as stocky as the histrionism of Corse Payton. Teeth pale white as the insides of clam shells; teeth as regular as the breaking of the Ten Commandments; teeth fair, teeth false. A debauch of girl, a tonal cataclysm of girl. Features as delicate as the innuendo of George Moore; features as coarse as that of Robert Chambers. Feet as small and slender as one of Somerset Maugham's plots; feet

broad of beam and of amplitudinous and obvious corns. A spree of Gladyses and Lilys, of Gerdas and Fritzie; a brawl of Marcelles and Rénéés, of Louisas and Rosas. Smiles like early morning April sunshine on an Adirondack trout stream; smiles toothful, smiles bovine. Legs big and crooked and knotty like those of a rustic bench; legs slim and trim and full of elastic grace like the boughs of the silver birch. Personalities like hushed melodies and others like trombones and others like a beer wagon grunting its way over the holes in Sixth Avenue, and still others as plaintive as the look of Marie Doro. Girls, girls, girls. Connies and Gwendolyns, Mellas and Eugénies, Henriettes and Gabrielles, Amandas and Gretchens—a republic, a Halloween, a zoo, a diatonic cascade, a vociferous gamut of Daisys and Peg-gys, of Mias and Myras, of Andréés and Céciles, of Josies and Marias!

In the matter of the most perfect and most dramatic physical unities, one may rate these girls of the foreign music shows as follows: 1. The chorus of the Hofoperntheater, Vienna (probably the likeliest congregation of *poules de luxe* in the world). 2. (a) The chorus of the Gaiety, London; (b) the chorus of the Adelphi, London (when, as at present, also in charge of George Edwardes). 3. The chorus of the Folies Marigny, Paris. 4. The chorus of the Berliner Theater, Berlin. (The native Ziegfeld girls will rank about four and a half if this list ever happens to be amplified by some appropriate person.) The ideal chorus girl, whom probably we shall all be privileged (on holidays) to observe from a distance* on Satan's right at the infernal breakfast table, will have the hair and figure of the Gaiety girl, the eyes and legs of the mademoiselle from the Marigny, the mouth and physical flexibility of the *mädel* from the Hofoperntheater and the complexion and spirit of the *fräulein* from the Charlottenstrasse. She will have the carriage of the English girl, the expression of the French girl, the voice of the Viennese and the German girl's lack of affectation. Neither the cheap,

transparent hauteur nor the spurious devilishness of the American chorus jade will be hers. . . . And, beholding her, Charles Belmont Davis will abruptly sit him down and write a lengthy poem. . . . And it will, in due time, be published in *Collier's Weekly*.

Ah me, could I but proceed to review these foreign shows as they should be reviewed! Could I but proceed to describe in my peculiarly picturesque and vivid style the girls the august Wright and I examined adown the Savoy's long lined lane, where topaz lights flash forth a million sparkling stars from what elsewhere would be mere knives and forks and spoons; and where Gaiety girls and Adelphi girls and the girls from the Lyric try to look like ladies—and somehow succeed. Could I but proceed to review the French shows as they ought surely to be reviewed—from those pigwidgeon, tree-hid retreats where we perused (at a dignified critical degree of remoteness) the *béguins* from the Jardin de Paris and the Olympia and the Ambassadeurs, the sweetmeats from the Marigny and the Apollo and the Théâtre Femina. Could I but criticize as criticize I should the shows of Berlin and the city by the Danube—away from the theaters, where the chief and most important elements of the shows are free from the interruptions of impudent arpeggios and intrusive libretti, what a critique would be there! What a stripping of this gorgeous, pompous fraud that has been named musical comedy; what a revelation of it in all its naked truth, its truth of a selling block, of a show platform, of a warehouse for good-looking girls—a medium for coining money out of the pharisaic yearnings not only of a few libidinous and salacious rascals (as some arid old philosophers would have us believe), but of the human male section of the human race. But, in the insurgent plerophory of Charles Klein, duty is duty. Correlatively, customs are customs. And so, in order to gratify a public that prefers always the traditional and trite viewpoint of everything having to do with morality, I shall defer to tradition—and proceed anew.

* Which is how we will know it is hell.

So be it. And may the dullness of it be upon your own heads.

On the voyage over, my cabin steward, a melancholy German named Schmidt, apprised me that his wife had written him that a new "Merry Widow" had taken the Fatherland by the ears—"DER LACHENDE EHEMANN" (The Laughing Husband) it was called, and Edmund Eysler was listed as its composer. Of course, when we at home hear or read announcement that "a new 'Merry Widow'" has arrived, we realize at once that the only thing that has arrived is an ambition on the part of some obscure reviewer to see himself quoted on the billboards. Unquestionably, the absence of billboards abroad has, through the removal of temptation, been a considerable factor in the preservation of the sanctity of theatrical criticism. Over here, however, any reviewer, no matter how syncopated or how much of a blank cartridge, can at any time achieve a temporary reputation for himself by wooing the billboard in one of the five following ways:

1. By comparing any musical comedy to "The Merry Widow."
2. By comparing any farce to "Charley's Aunt."
3. By comparing the big scene in any sex play to the one in "Mrs. Dane's Defense."
4. By comparing any play intended for children to "Little Lord Fauntleroy."
5. By comparing any play of any sort in any way, however irrelevant, to "Camille."

But let us return to our pig's knuckles. Arrived in Germany, I found that Mrs. Schmidt's letter to her husband had (in part) spoken the truth. On every side I heard and read that "*Der Lachende Ehemann*" ist eine andere "*Lustige Witwe*." And, appreciating that the Germans, theatrically at least, are not a people given to the American habit of gaudy hyperbole, I made haste to Montis Operetten-Theater. . . . A dolorous show. Eysler, a man seemingly of one thin musical mood, discloses himself here again as an obvious orchestrator of molasses, as a transparent composer of the marshmallow in three flats. Sweet and sticky stuffs—melodious platitudes. Beside even his "Love

Cure," Eysler's latest attempt goes pale; beside such a sterling piece as our own vastly underestimated "Purple Road," Eysler's overheralded effort takes on the air of a product of the pot house. Of the whole score, but one composition, extolling the virtues of Rhenish grape juice, evinces a fugitive merit—and this composition, too, is as obvious sentimentally as a violin. The libretto, by Brammer and Grünwald, relates this sensationally novel and clever story:

An elderly and self-made man of the people marries the aristocratic Heloise. Heloise perspires to experience a real romance, which her husband fails to provide, so that she may write a book about it. In her pursuit, she falls enthusiastically into the passionate clutches of the handsome Count Selztak, and is presently discovered there by her spouse. Climax. What does spouse do? "Knowing women," shrewd and sapient scalamag that he is, he insists that Heloise marry the Count after he has given her a divorce. And, this pronunciamiento negotiated, he laughs a sly laugh into his cuff because he knows she will not do it, but will return to love him all the more. And, this being a play, of course Heloise returns. Noble piffle. The most amusing moments in the entertainment are associated with the intermittent spectacles of the tumultuously obese Fräulein Kriwitz, as Heloise, waxing coy and sentimental in the moonlight with the almost equally chubby Herr Kutzner, as the Count.

* * *

In Berlin, it is called "FILMZAUBER"; at the Gaiety in London "THE GIRL ON THE FILM." The guilty parties are the Herren Bernauer and Schanzer (librettists) and Kollo and Bredschneider (composers). Take the girls out of this show and nothing remains but a rather ingenious scene in the second act depicting the enactment in a village of a historical military episode for a moving picture company and the attendant excitement on the part of the confused natives who believe their country is being invaded by a neighboring and hostile nation. (This scene has already been

boldly appropriated by Lew Fields in his "All Aboard.") The book of the piece is witless and, in the British version, is further aggravated by the enormous self-satisfaction (sartorial and otherwise) of George Grossmith and the Connie Ediss species of fat-lady humor. The tunes are flat and antique, and the fertility and quality of the lyrics may best be appreciated from a glance at the following sample, attached to the song hit of the piece:

Unter 'n Linden, unter 'n Linden,
Geh 'n spazier 'n die Mägdelein—
Wenn du Lust hast anzubinden
So spaziere hinterdrein;
Fängst du an bei Café Bauer,
Sagst sie dir noch: "Ich debauer,"
Bist du am Pariser Platz,
Da ist sie schön dein Schatz.

From the idea of this lyric, which was used eight years ago in this country in a tawdry ballad of subway flirtation (yowled by Adele Ritchie in one of the Casino shows) to the opening chorus of typists (the same lyric idea as was employed in Frank Daniels's old piece, "The Office Boy"), Bernauer and his comrade have disclosed nothing more than a palpable array of what may be termed i-o-u-deas. In both Berlin and London, the show stands on the legs of the chorus—certainly not on its own.

The most popular tune man in Germany today is Jean Gilbert, whose "PUFFCHEN" (at the Thalia Theater) and "KINO-KÖNIGIN" (at the Metropol) accompany the juicy seidels and occupy the *kapellmeister's* baton in the Zoologischer Garten, the Spreezelt, the Spandauerberg-Brauerei, at Kroll's and at Knappe's, in the Palais de Danse and Hopfenblüthe and the Admiralspalast Eis Arena, and in each and every *biercabaret* from Charlottenburg station to the nethermost depths of the Friedrichstrasse. One eats, drinks, walks and sleeps to "Puppchen, du bist mein Augenstern, Puppchen, hab dich zum fressen gern" and to "Liebliche kleine Dingerchen, wer euch ins Aug' geseh'n, den wickelt ihr ums Fingerchen und um seine Ruh' ist's geseh'n." (The latter tune has already been insinuated bodily under a disguising lyric into the New York

Winter Garden show.) A merry, if unimportant fellow, this Gilbert. A schnitzl becomes the more toothsome for one of his melodies, Liebfraumilch the more fragrant with memories, little Mitzi the more lovely—and home further away. Of the libretti which periodically interrupt Herr Jean's melodies in the theater, it need only be suggested that it is preferable to listen to the tunes in the more tranquil atmosphere obtaining in a cool *weinstube*.

When the Berliner *kapellmeister* is not engaged with Gilbert, the Dorfkinder waltzes from "DER ZIGEUNERPRIMAS" (Gypsy Leader) of Emmerich Kalman, wafted from Vienna, scent the breezes that his baton stirs. From the Prater, far to the southeast, where the seven-medaled *militär-kapellmeister* Vinzenz Robert Prax, of Infantry Regiment 84, the six-medaled Richard Hunyaczek, of Infantry Regiment 99, and the one-medaled but none the less gymnastic Emil Thost, of 26, swing their strong-lunged bands into the theme, trickles across the frontier the "Komm mit mir, ich tanz mit dir in's Himmelreich hinein"—"come with me, I'll dance with thee into Paradise." Not substantial concert hall music, this of Kalman's, but music playing hard and deliberately and theatrically on the sob chords of the instruments—and music, therefore, to make mellow the grim primitive that is in all of us, music to sweeten the vacationing intelligence, to breathe doubled rapture to a Laranaga and doubled peace to a Henry Clay; to create in one a filibustering inclination toward intrigue with the *kellnerin* (see Sophie: SMART SET, April 1913, p. 103). Ah me, how mild the night, and what perfume from the roses and how deep the twin souls of lapis lazuli that dream in the orbs of yon beauteous *fräulein*! . . . Ah me, why are there in the world such rude, disturbing things, such grisly realisms, as libretti? And theaters?

At the Operetten Theater, in the Kaisergarten, Vienna, "HOHEIT TANZT WALZER" (Royalty Dances Waltzes), a stupid, sickly specimen—music by Leo Ascher, book by the "Laughing Husband" brothers.

"Do you know who that lady is with whom you have just been dancing?"

"No, and I care not. All I know is that the waltz was made for her, for her alone!"

"That lady, my boy, that lady is—the Prinzessin Marie!" (Music cue: "*Ach, mein Herz, was für ein Schmerz*" u. s. w.)

I have since heard that the last act of this piece contained some elements of merit, but that is not for me definitely to say. Two acts were sufficient to drive me, frantic and foaming at the mouth, to the nearby phonograph slot machines where antidotes (albeit stomach-rending) were to be obtained in the form of Pryor's Asbury Park band's rendition of "When the Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves for Alabama" and kindred American folkslieder. Herr Leo Ascher, estimating his talents from this one exhibition, writes the kind of tunes that George Barr McCutcheon novelizes.

At the Raimund Theater, Vienna, a distant sort of music show treatment of Thoma's interesting comedy, "Moral," called by the piquing name "DAS HABEN DIE MÄDCHEN SO GERN" (The Girls Like It). Some pretty good fun here. But, as this magazine is published for English speaking people and actors, I shall carefully preserve the sanctity and modesty, and defer to the moral sensitivity, of the American home by conducting an explanation of the "Das" in its native language. Therefore: "Das Haben die Mädchen So Gern," das war einst das Lieblingssprichwort Franz Fröhlichs, eines fidelen Wiener Kindes, als er noch ein Jüngling mit lockigem Haar gewesen ist. Unter dieser Devise war er einst ein sehr lockerer Zeisig, der viele verlebte Abenteuer bestand. Er wusste damals ganz genau, was die Mädchen gerne hatten. Heute ist er ein reicher Bürger, Fabrikant und mehrfacher Hausbesitzer, der sich allenthalben als gesetzter Mann gibt und gerne in harmloser Scheinheiligkeit den Sittenstrengen spielt. Aber der alte Adam steckt ihm trotz seiner würdigen Aussenseite in allen Gliedern und er weiss auch heute noch sehr gut was "die Mädchen so gerne haben." Die alte

Devise drängt sich ihm auch heute noch gelegentlich über die Lippen und die Lust fidelen Abenteuern ist ihm treu geblieben, so dass es ihn Mühe kostet den Halodri immer zu unterdrücken.

Da er wegen seines sonst wohlthätigen Wirkens als Gönner und Obmann verschiedener humanitärer Vereine wiederholt in den Journalen gelobt wurde, ist ihm die öffentliche Anerkennung zu Kopf gestiegen und er fasst plötzlich den Entschluss, einen Verein "zur Rettung betrogener Mädchen" zu gründen. Er will den armen gefallenen Mädeln unter die Arme greifen, ihnen helfen—die Schlimmsten aufsuchen und auf den Weg der Tugend zurückführen.

Während er aber auf der einen Seite einen Verein zur Rettung betrogener Mädchen gründet, verweigert er seinem Sohn Karl eigensinnig die väterliche Einwilligung zur Heirat mit einem schönen braven Mädchen, das sich bereits aus eigener Kraft eine sehr anständige Existenz geschaffen hat, aber kein Vermögen besitzt, nur weil er für seinen Sohn eine gute Partie ins Auge gefasst hat. Poldi aber lässt sich durch das "Nein" des Papas nicht einschüchtern. Sie nimmt es in fröhlich-mutiger Weise auf sich, ihr Schicksal selbst zu bestimmen und sich ihren Karl zu erkämpfen. Gerade die scheinheilige Vereinsgründung bietet ihr die Mittel und Wege, den Alten mürbe zu machen und ihn mit seinen eigenen Waffen zu schlagen. Mit Hilfe ihres väterlichen Freundes Schopp setzt sie eine lustige Intrigue in Szene, lässt alle Künste der liebenswürdigsten Koketterie und ihres spitzbubenhaften Übermutes spielen, bis sie den lusternen Moralprediger zur Gänze in ihren Netzen verstrickt hat. Papa Fröhlich folgt dem reizenden Irrlicht durch dick und dünn und nachdem sie ihn und seinen ebenso heuchlerischen als lebenslustigen Schwiegersohn durch unzählige Verlegenheiten und Katastrophen gelockt hat, triumphiert sie am Ende und der Herr Vereinspräsident ist zum Schluss froh, den lustigen Kobold als erstes Rettungsergebnis der von ihm gegründeten fidelen Rettungsgesellschaft präsentieren zu können.

So much for "Das." "Die Mädchen"? Not so much!

At the Volksooper (Kaiserjubiläums-Stadttheater), Buchbinder and Jarno's melodious operetta "DIE FÖRSTER-CHRISTL," already known to American audiences under the title of "The Girl and the Kaiser." At the Hofoperntheater (with its symmetrical and succulent chorus), Verdi's "TROUBADOUR," translated into German by Heinrich Proch from the original of Cammarano.

Back now, momentarily, before marching against Paris, to London. "THE DANCING MISTRESS" (Adelphi), with tunes by Lionel Monckton and chorus girls by God. What girls!! (There he is back at it again). Girls gorgeous as the Daughter of Zeus and Leda, "fairer than the evening air, clad in the beauty of a thousand stars." Girls of eyes of twilight, such dancing nymphs "as Corot set free among the silver poplars of France." Girls of lips of the crimson dawn, lips surrendering a thousand pearls at the siege of a thousand smiles—pearls as of the sea shells "echoed in the church of St. Mark at Venice." Girls in whose hearts there reigns forever the eternal, tinkling youth of a lost Ruritania, and in whose laughter are born the memories of fragrant apple orchards and fields of wild pink clover and boyhood sweethearts that never were. Therefore a surpassing, a superb success—despite the fact that the libretto, music, scenery and principals are perfectly commonplace. At the Lyric, our old friend "THE GIRL IN THE TAXI," with its conventional and stupid stage brand of naughtiness and its lilting measures by the creator of "Puppchen" and "Kino-Königin." So far as the halls go, the general caliber of "EIGHT-PENCE A MILE" at the Alhambra, "HULLO, RAGTIME" at the Hippodrome and "COME OVER HERE" at the transformed London Opera House may accurately be suggested by a brief glimpse at the characteristic show obtaining at the Empire and called "ALL THE WINNERS." This affair, like each of the others, is merely a syncopated jumble of New York Winter Garden and Ziegfeld "Follies" numbers with an em-

phatic obbligato by the bass drum—a jumblepie in which actors supposed to represent Melba, Kubelik, Caruso, Paderevski, Lily Elsie, Bernard Shaw, Mr. Balfour, Gaby Deslys and kindred big customers of the advertising department are employed as per habit for the purpose of making the public think it is seeing a "revue" instead of just a plain and very ordinary vaudeville show. Among the new and distinctly British songs sung in the production may be mentioned "Hitchy Koo," "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee" and "Rum Tum Tiddle."

* * *

Paris at last! Paris—Kaiserin of the cosmos! Paris—oolala, winewomanand-song, ilesttrèsgentil, youbuymedrink? Paris—the musical comedy of a tragic world. . . . At the Folies Bergère, "LA REVUE EN CHEMISE!" a half-witted exhibition on the part of authors Louis Lemarchand, Lucien Boyer and Battaille-Henri to demonstrate how dirty and dull they can be at one and the same time. The show derives its name from the display of the chorus wenches in such garments as are generally confined, in the United States, at least, to the boudoir, the department store windows and the advertising section of the *New York Sunday Times's* illustrated family supplement. This inspiration comes at the very start of the evening's proceedings and is gradually worked up to a thrilling climax, an hour and a half later, in the "vingtième tableau"—a scene styled "Le Bain de Phryné," in which many of the girls would seem to indicate beyond the peradventure of a doubt and slightest chance of contradiction that the international and celebrated, if tawdry, quip relating to the French custom of bathing once a month whether it is needed or not is less a quip than some of us have believed. Faico, the Argentine dancer from Second Avenue and Sixteenth Street, who shook his torso in one of the earlier "Follies" in this country, is on hand with his physical nonsense, as is Anna Held with her familiar *lit* that lies in woman's eyes and with a mongrel rendition of you-gret-beeg-beauteefull-doll. Also the "Danseurs et Dan-

senses Espagnols," those old frauds who have been casteneting around the Bal Tabarin this last decade long. Also, of course, "Alexander's Ragtime Band." Also the dear old "Marche Militaire" of the amazons—two and two, four and four, lines of eight, about face, ta-ra-ta-ra-ta-ra, into pinwheel formation, double quick, about face, halt! From trapdoor in centre a stout gal bearing aloft the tricolor. The "Marseillaise." Curtain.

These Paris revues, all of them are (save in the quality of girl) always much the same. The only thing that ever changes in them is the chorus—and all that that changes is its clothes. And, in relation to this, it has always seemed to me that the script of the libretto of a Paris revue must look very much as follows:

8:45 P.M.—Enter chorus in cloaks, hats, long gowns, lingerie, shoes and stockings.

9:10 P.M.—Enter chorus in hats, long gowns, lingerie, shoes and stockings.

9:40 P.M.—Enter chorus in long gowns, lingerie, shoes and stockings.

10:05 P.M.—Enter chorus in lingerie, shoes and stockings.

10:25 P.M.—Enter chorus in lingerie.

10:45 P.M.—Enter chorus.

It is as difficult to discover any girl dressed on a Paris music show stage after 10:45 as it is to find a good actor on the American dramatic stage before or after that time. In my present tour of the Gallic halls, the only girl I found anywhere with any clothes on was Mado Minty at the Marigny. And I had to take the word of the gentleman sitting next me for that. He had an opera glass. The revue at the Boite à Fursy is this season called "Ah! Eh! Hi! Oh! Hue!" Its leading sensation is the singing of a song, late in the bill, by Mlle. Jane Danjou, in which there is actually not one single reference to a bed. The Cigale revue is named "A LA BAGUETTE!" (Paris revues always have an exclamation point after their titles. This is to impress the visiting Americans. It signifies to them something awfully wicked.) The leading figures in the spectacle are (those of) Nina Myral, Lucette Darbelle, Rachel Lyska and

Alice Walser. Max Dearly, the eminent comic, so I am told by some very old men who have been to the performance, is in the show. Personally, I must say I don't know. I find it impossible to watch two things at once. At the Olympia, "LA REVUE MERVEILLEUSE!"—the usual compound of American ragtime and Gallic *deshabille*. At the Moulin Rouge, "VICIEUSE VA!" uncovering, in addition to much music show material that was already old in New York way back in the days when Augustus Thomas was still alive, the saucy Djin D'Irroy (she of the figure *très élégante*), the wistful Gaby Benda (she of the *œil de l'ailette*) and the eternally grinning Yetta Rianza (she of the *dents de même que perles*). The revue also uncovers a Mlle. Davrigny (save for a pair of thin pink silk tights) and a Mlle. Barbier (in toto).

At the Gaité-Lyrique, that beloved Parisian stand-by "LES CLOCHES DE CORNEVILLE" (The Chimes of Normandy). At the Théâtre Apollo, "LA JEUNESSE DORÉE," a more or less opérette by Henri Verne and Gabriel Faure, with music by Marcel Lattès. A pony ballet is one of the big novelties here. At the Théâtre Femina, more "revue"—"EH! EH!"—with Régine Flory as the climacteric undresser. At the Alhambra a French version of the Winter Garden's "HONEYMOON EXPRESS," featuring the Americanized Gaby Deslys and her celebrated aigrette. At the Ba-Ta-Clan, still more "revue"—"BIEN MARIE!" Same old thing. At the Concert Mayol, still more—"V'LA LE RAFFUT!" Same old thing. At La Scala, still more—"ON VA UNE FOIS RIRE!" * * * But the latter I did not remain to see, for I felt that by this time the moon must be hanging high over the silvered Seine and that the warm night wind must be playing youth back again into the tired lilacs on a little terrace not many miles from the gardens of the Luxembourg (but a million miles from stageland) and that soft brown hair and slanting amethyst eyes must be looking very lovely in the fragile half-green, half-yellow of a Paris Junetime night. . . .

"WITH YOUR KIND PERMISSION—"

By H. L. Mencken

FORTY-SEVEN long years must come and go before the people of the United States may celebrate the centenary of James Hunecker with any approach to historical accuracy, but meanwhile the man himself hears the wan music of pre-Boehmian flutes and *viols da gamba* in his dreams, and calls his new book "THE PATHOS OF DISTANCE" (quoting Nietzsche, who hated the past even more than the present); and grows lyrical over the Viola of Adelaide Neilson, and gossips about the archaic amours of Villers de l'Isle Adam and Helena von Racowitza, and tells tales of a prehistoric Paris which yet disputed over "Die Walküre," and lifts his voice in half-hearted praise of monogamy, carpet slippers and art à quatre mains, and shuffles about the stage made up as Ancient Pistol (or is it the Venerable Bede?), his face concealed by a palpably artificial beard, his voice pitched to an almost Paleolithic falsetto:

*Eheu fugaces, Postume, Postume,
Labuntur anni: nec pietas moram
Rugis et instanti senectæ
Adferet, indomitaque morti!*

I suspect German blood, both in Q. Horatius Flaccus and in Hunecker. Who but a German sheds tears over the grape-skins of day before yesterday, the Elsa of 1891? Who but a German sprouts foliage upon his cheeks at forty-five, and goes into Congress gaiters, and makes his will, and begins to call his wife "Mamma"? The green sickness of youth is endemic from pole to pole, as much so as measles or influenza; but what race save the German is flooded by that blue distemper of middle age, with its sentimental burblings a *capella*, its hallucinations of a lost *jugendzeit*, its so copious lacry-

morrhea? Myself tedescan, I have lent a loud beeritone to the chorus more than once, mingling tears with Franziskanerbräu, or perhaps Kulmbacher, or Pilsener. I am not forty-five by service, of course, but merely by brevet—by diameter, as it were: the German way of measuring all things, from radishes to soprani. And it must be by some similar process that Hunecker has reached seventy-five a quarter of a century ahead of time, to the sound of his own lament:

*Schön ist die Jugendzeit:
Sie kommt nicht mehr!*

But of such speculations, enough! The important news is that "THE PATHOS OF DISTANCE" (*Scribner*) is full of racy and Huneckerian stuff, a book in his indubitable manner, four hundred pages of amazingly interesting and stimulating criticism. And not criticism of books alone, nor of plays and music, but of pictures and philosophies, cities and neo-Celts, stylists and sentimentalists, women and *weltanschauungen*. One turns from a report of an encounter with George Moore on the esplanade in front of St. Richard's, at Bayreuth, to a prose hymn in praise of fireworks; from an acute study of Whistler to a devastating attack upon William James; from the affair Wesendonck to the plays of John Millington Synge; from Mme. Gautier's "Souvenirs Autour d'un Groupe Littéraire" to Dr. Oscar Levy's monumental edition of Nietzsche in English; from the Franz Halses in the Cassel Gallery to Fifth Avenue on a summer day; from Matisse to Bergson; from Walter Pater; to Chateaubriand; from Théophile Gautier to Ferdinand Lassalle. Time was when the word "scientist" meant a master of all exact knowledge; today it means a dab-

bler in some microscopic puddle, shut off from all other puddles. And much the same withering specialization has taken place in the field of art: a man who knows English blank verse thoroughly is assumed, as a matter of course, to be ignorant of *bel canto* and the Aristotelian unities. But Huneker gives the lie to that theory of limitations. He invades the *beaux arts* one and all, and into each he takes some point of view, some turn of phrase, some idea of truth and beauty that leads back to another. I had almost said that he sometimes seems to *hear* a picture and *see* a symphonic poem. The idea is not wholly absurd. Who hasn't *seen* the prancing yokels in the Pastorale?

It is precisely this capacity for exhibiting one art in the light of another that gives the criticism of Huneker its peculiar color and charm—this and the enormous information which is a part of it. No other critic that I know carries around a vaster cargo of critical raw material, not even Georg Brandes. The man has apparently read all the books that are worth reading in all the civilized tongues, and looked at all the first rate paintings, and heard all the music, and seen all the plays. And what he has read and heard and seen he remembers accurately, and what he remembers he is ever ready to dredge up on the instant, to point a moral or adorn a tale. His infinite allusiveness, indeed, is a handicap as well as an adornment: it puts heavier burdens on the reader than most readers are trained to bear. It is a sort of post-graduate school that he conducts; he assumes that every pupil has passed the regular classes. But if all this is a bit dashing to the many, it is flattering to the few—and it is through the few that the Hunekerian influence has gone out to the many. For fifteen years past he has been the teacher of our teachers, the critic for our critics. I do not say that he has prevailed—our native criticism is still of buttermilk and bonbons all compact—but at any rate he has made his protest heard. At any rate, he has raised his eloquent plea for the anarchy and pathfinder in art, the man with something new to say.

The late Percival Pollard, himself an ingenious critic and a maker of electric prose, once entered the objection against Huneker that he showed no interest in Americans. A sound enough objection on its face. So far as his books reveal, the only Americans that he is tolerantly aware of are Whistler and Poe, neither of whom was much more American than Tschaikowsky or Zola. Has he ever read "Huckleberry Finn"? The evidence is not in court. Or "Sister Carrie"? Or "What Maisie Knew"? I can't answer. Even the "Symphony from the New World" gets only the conventional scorn from him: he speaks of it as if he had never looked at the score. But let us allow the man his free choice of occupation! No divine necessity to beat the national cymbals is upon him; a critic is not a conscript. The task he has picked out for himself is that of making us acquainted with strange gods, and that task he has carried through with unflinching ardor and address. He is our great introducer, our roving consul general of the arts. He was one of the first Americans to arrive at a sound understanding of Ibsen; he was the first to see the red star of Nietzsche; he was the advance agent of Shaw and Strindberg, of Maeterlinck and Hauptmann, of Sudermann and Richard Strauss. He was writing about Henry Becque so long ago as 1895: our first book of Becque's plays is announced for next winter! He was talking about Eugène Brieux back in the "Blanchette" days: years before the press agents began prodding the plain people with "Damaged Goods." Counting out what Pollard did for the Young Germany crowd, and Howells for certain novelists, and what Payne tried to do for Björnson, he has made this pioneering business his very own, and he has done it from first to last with superb skill. And just that, be it known, is the highest function of criticism: to lead us to new ideas. The proof of Brandes, the greatest of them all, lies in Ibsen and Nietzsche, the greatest of his discoveries.

But it is as stylist, even more than as critic, that Huneker stands head and shoulders above the general, for he gets into his prose the quality of gusto, the

air of one enjoying the making of it, and that is something which very few other Americans show. Has anyone ever noticed the heaviness of our national style, a heaviness scarcely matched in England and Germany? Our very newspapers are written in the fashion of a death warrant; our prevailing criticism smells of the pulpit, the Chautauqua, the school-room. (Think of William Winter, Clayton Hamilton, Paul Elmer More, the old-maidish waggishness of Howells, the elephantine tread of the *Dial* and the *Bookman*!) But Huneker writes like a Frenchman—like those misplanted Frenchmen, Friedrich Nietzsche and George Henry Lewes. He is not afraid to tell a joke; he doesn't hesitate to reach out pretty far to drag in a good phrase, an odd fact, a pinch of something savory for the pudding; above all, he meets George Gissing's demand that "the artist should be free from everything like moral prepossession." You will never find him denouncing an idea on the mere score of its unusualness; he is not one to measure first rate men with the yardstick of the rabble; he is wholly free from that national Puritanism which attempts to reduce all art to terms of a windy and puerile morality; he doesn't apply the theology of the "Jubilee Songs" to concepts of civilized men.

If he bears a simple label, indeed, it is that of anti-Philistine. And the Philistine he attacks is not that vacant and harmless fellow who belongs to the Odd Fellows and recreates himself with *Puck* and *Judge* in the barber shop, but that more belligerent and pretentious donkey who presumes to do battle for "honest" thought and a "sound" ethic—the "forward looking" man, the university ignoramus, the conservator of orthodoxy, the rattler of ancient phrases—what Nietzsche called "the Philistine of culture." It is against this fat milch cow of wisdom that Huneker has brandished a spear since first there was a Huneker. And him he still challenges in "THE PATHOS OF DISTANCE," for all its tempering of old ardors with old memories. He is still a sworn foe to "the traps that snare the attention from poor or mediocre workmanship—the traps of senti-

mentalism, of false feeling, of cheap pathos, of the cheap moral." He is still on the trail of those pious mountebanks who "clutter the marketplaces with their booths, mischievous half-art and tubs of tripe and soft soap." He is still the same old Huneker, impudent, persuasive, omniscient, exotic, incomparable, *sui generis*.

And what he has tried to do for the tart fellows of Gaul and the Northland, Henry T. Finck does for decent victualry in his "FOOD AND FLAVOR" (Century Co.), a huge tome of six hundred pages, disorderly in plan and argument, but saved by a gigantic enthusiasm. Here in These States, says Mr. Finck, it is now a hard matter to get a presentable meal. All our so-called cooks are mere mechanics, bent only on rushing through their day's work with the least possible expenditure of effort. Their attitude of mind is not that of the artist, but that of the union man. The strident shriek of the twelve o'clock whistle is the one form of music that delights them; they have no ears for the softer, sweeter overtones of an enchanted client's labored breathing. The black mammy of the last age is no more. Her bedizened granddaughter of today is a caricature and libel of her—a blundering assassin who makes the lordliest Smithfield ham taste of Chicago and the phenol group, and who couldn't make a respectable hoe cake for all the gems of Ind. And the alleged Frenchmen who infest the kitchens of our hotels are as pestiferous as the native cockroaches. If, by any chance, they have any talent when they land, it is quickly corrupted and blown up by the sorrows of their exile. The arctic rigors of our national life are fatal to their art. They are shut off from inspiration, from intellectual alimentation, from the sunlight of civilization. As well expect birds of paradise to flourish in chicken coops, or goldfish in dishwater. I heard lately of a French cook among us who was jailed for betraying a chambermaid. Is that the way to treat an artist? Is that the way to get a Rouen duck worthy of Frédéric Delair, or even a passable *poulet de Bresse*?

Mr. Finck seems to think that we are

poisoned with bad food in the United States because we are too busy with other affairs to give the solemn business of eating proper attention, but it is my own theory that our national distrust of all art and artists also has a good deal to do with it. An American who devotes any time and thought to eating, and who holds himself out as a connoisseur, must expect to be regarded somewhat askance by his friends. They move him over, by a sort of instinctive process, into the region of the not quite respectable. His adherence to one vice hints at a probable adherence to other vices. It surprises no one to hear scandal about him. He occupies the dubious social ground of a musician, a jockey, a Congressman, a co-respondent in divorce cases. He even lacks the saving grace of devilishness. He is merely a gross sensualist, and no one wants to have too much to do with him or to be seen too often in his company. The normal, the typical American is free from any such carnal leaning. He eats for the sole purpose of keeping body and soul together, and so he gets through the business as fast as possible, and with the least possible waste of emotion. He likes to boast, not that he has enjoyed a noble meal, but that he has no time for meals. No American business man with a care for his credit would dare to expose himself in the daily act of eating a well cooked and leisurely luncheon. If the lusts of his flesh are overpowering, if he simply can't keep going on the national pie and milk, he usually has his victuals brought to his office, that he may devour them without publicity, or he meets a group of other such voluptuaries in some private place, and there disports himself without risk. The national ideal is John D. Rockefeller, whose favorite victual is graham crackers soaked in *schmierkäse*. No man who could tell the difference between diamond back terrapin and common mud turtle has ever been elected President of the United States. Chester A. Arthur could do it—but Arthur was put into office by a murderer, and not by the free votes of decent Americans.

This incurable Puritanism is not hinted at by Mr. Finck, but he has a good deal to say of its natural child, our national talent for chicanery. The Puritan is always a sharp trader, a substitutionist. A being wholly devoid of the esthetic sense, he has no genuine pride in the things he manufactures and sells, but only in the profits he makes. It satisfies him just as much to sell nutmegs made of wood, or even of castiron or celluloid, as to merchant the authentic and exquisite kernel of the *Myristica fragrans*. Hence the widespread and shameless sophistication of our foodstuffs. The meat packers of Chicago, as we all know, had so little professional self-respect that they were willing to sell embalmed garbage under their trademarks. They got no pleasure out of packing and selling honest meat; there was not the slightest flavor of esthetic dignity in their commercial ardor. The one thing they craved was money, and in order to get it they were willing to sacrifice everything else, including honor. The same weakness is visible in most of our other purveyors of eatables, whether by wholesale or by retail. Mutton is mere mutton to our butchers, and a meal is a mere meal to our hotel keepers. But here, as Mr. Finck points out, the worst effects of lack of imagination are being combated by law. What pride can't do may yet be accomplished by threats of jail. We shall never, perhaps, get inspired food, but in two or three generations we may at least get clean food.

More serious and hortatory books—for example, "How I KEPT MY BABY WELL," by Anna G. Noyes, B. Sc. (Warwick-York), an exhaustive treatise upon the care of the human infant, with many illustrations, diagrams and charts. A celibate and a blushful man, I find myself somewhat disconcerted by the intimate physiology of this little book, but a medical gentleman to whom I have submitted it reports that it is an acute and valuable work, and so I recommend it cheerfully to all young mothers. In the index I am less embarrassed, and there I make curious discoveries. The day of camomile tea, it appears, is past: the modern infant doesn't know

its taste. In my own nonage, back in the last century, the stuff was brewed by the gallon and kept in a jug behind the door, and every suspicious yell meant a stiff swig of it. So with sweet spirits of nitre: that day was counted lost whose low descending sun brought no dose from the battered bottle. And so, too, with blackberry cordial, magnesia, thrush powder, paregoric, arnica, sulphur and molasses, and turpentine and lard. Mrs. Noyes doesn't mention one of them. Her armamentarium runs to boracic acid, benzoine, alboline, resorcin, menthol, tannic acid and mucol. I see sulphur three times, but what has become of the molasses? I see ipecac twice, but what of boneset tea? Alas, those ancients of the pharmacopœia are no more! The family medicine chest is bare of them; druggists don't keep them. And gone, too, I dare say, are cobwebs, balsam apple and stick licorice. Of all the Old Guard only castor oil remains in harness—with seventeen references! Hail, benign hobgoblin of happier, simpler days! *Prosit*, old foe, old friend! Would that some bard would sing thee in mellow strophes! What a theme for George Sylvester Viereck!

Frederic J. Haskin's book on "THE IMMIGRANT" (Revell), like his previous volume on "The American Government," is marked by extreme precision and carefulness of statement. He doesn't indulge in any flowery rhapsodies upon the bleached Mongolians who now move to free America from the Mediterranean littoral, nor does he proceed to any rhetorical denunciation of them. His one aim is to describe them exactly as they are, leaving the question of their biological and political significance to the reader. And to that end he labors with great painstaking, showing us where the latter day immigrant comes from, how he is brought here and what becomes of him after he arrives. I know of no man better fitted for this business than Mr. Haskin. He is one of the most extensive travelers of modern times, and has personally visited every country from which immigrants are now coming—not merely to send off picture postcards and roast the waiters,

but with the eye and pen of a sharp newspaper reporter. In addition, he has covered the United States so thoroughly that he could write an American Baedeker without stirring from his desk. The result of all his experience and observation is a book which stands far above the vaporings of the philanthropists, bogus "experts" and college professors. It is an admirable introduction to a complex and baffling subject, and the general reader will probably find that, after reading it, he need not go any further.

Two other sound books of fact are "WOMEN AS WORLD BUILDERS," by Floyd Dell (*Forbes*), and "THE NEW UNIONISM," by André Tridon (*Huebsch*). The first named is a brief description of the feminist movement of our time—a movement pursuing many paths and led by prophetesses who are seldom in accord. But under it all, as Mr. Dell shows, there is the common demand for a striking off of woman's old shackles, in custom as well as in law. In Henrik Ibsen's Notebook, under date of October 19, 1878, you will find a penetrating description of woman as she was: "There are two kinds of spiritual law, two kinds of conscience, one in man and another, altogether different, in women. They do not understand each other; but in practical life the woman is judged by man's law, as though she were not a woman but a man. . . . A woman cannot be herself in the society of the present day, which is an exclusively masculine society, with laws framed by men and with a judicial system that judges feminine conduct from a masculine point of view." Superficial critics of the suffrage propaganda fall into the error of assuming that what all the discontented damsels yearn for is the right to ape men. That assumption is very unfair to such women as Dora Marsden, Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Ellen Key. What the dear girls want is the right to be free, to decide their special problems in their own way, to run the affairs of their own sex woman-fashion, without let or hindrance from the tyrannical male. May they get their hearts' desire—say about the year 1965, after the angels have snatched me up to heaven!

So long as George Graham Rice is boasting about his daredevil feats as a race track tipster, mine promoter and general chaser of suckers, his story of "MY ADVENTURES WITH YOUR MONEY" (*Badger*) is unfailingly lively and entertaining; but when he puts on the gilt halo and embroidered chemise of a Wall Street martyr, and begins to tell how he was persecuted for being too honest, all the savor dies out of his narrative, and it becomes heavy reading indeed. But even so, you will enjoy it down to page 288. Rice is not only a good story teller: he is a racy and amusing character. Something of old Benvenuto's fine innocence is in him; he combines the guileful enterprise of a middle-aged serpent with the simple unmorality of a boy of six. Our popular novelists often try to imagine such dashing fellows: the current novels, indeed, are full of stock market bravos. But where is there one to match young Mr. Rice, with his Napoleonic conquests in the betting ring, his easy transition to mining stocks, his thrilling adventures at Goldfield, Rawhide and Tonopah, his inordinate feats of press-agenting, his undisguised pride in every trick he turns? That the man is also a moralist and prone to smack his lips over platitudes, and that he even professes to see a moral quality in some of his own acts—all this does no damage to his story, but rather adds to its piquancy. Benvenuto had the same habit, not to mention Samuel Pepys and Huckleberry Finn. But when he begins to pose as a martyr, and to ascribe the raid upon his brokerage house to vague and mysterious enemies, all inspired by horror of his virtue—then he becomes ridiculous, and, what is worse, tedious. As I have said, however, his book assays far more bright metal than dull rock. I commend it to all who love an audacious story, straightforwardly and naively told. It has more juice in it than forty department store novels.

Of admitted fiction, "HAGAR REVELLY," by Daniel Carson Goodman (*Kennerley*), is the most interesting that I can find in the current crop, searching with eagle eye. It is the story of a

working girl who progresses to taxicabs and X-ray skirts through gate No. 7, but it differs very materially from the common run of such tales, for on the one hand it is wholly free from giggling "suggestion," and on the other hand it preaches no Sunday-school, penny whistle pieties. Dr. Goodman's method is simpler than either of these, and a good deal more honest. He tells about Hagar in a forthright, unstudied, almost bald manner, concealing nothing and slobbering over nothing. First we get a rapid picture of the Revelly home with its clownish old musician of a father, its weak, drab mother and its two sharply differentiated daughters, Hagar the sprightly and Thatah the sedate. Then we see it suddenly split and divide, like a cell under a microscope, Hagar going off with her mother, and Thatah remaining behind. Soon there is a second fission, and Hagar is left to shift for herself. She goes into a department store; attracts the attention of Benjamin Greenfield, the manager; resists his polite offer to protect her; falls in love with a young clerk named Frank Herrick; permits him to seduce her—and then finds herself deserted, and with a baby to care for. No, this baby doesn't "redeem" little Hagar; the so-called instinct of motherhood, so much heard of in fiction, doesn't arise in her and overwhelm her, converting her into a walking tract society overnight. Such things always happen to the betrayed virgins of moral fable, but Hagar really did most of her betraying herself. She is, in fact, of defective virtue by natural gift and predisposition, and when Thatah offers to take the baby off her hands, she is heartily glad to be rid of it, and doesn't concern herself about it further.

The rest of her story is that of thousands of other such gay canaries of our large cities. She turns to Greenfield, tries to make him marry her, and when he raises constitutional objections, goes to live with him. Naturally enough, she is unfaithful to him, and one day he finds it out. Then she runs off to Paris (with money previously wheedled from him), and there falls honestly in

love with a middle-aged Westerner. But this Westerner is a bit sniffish and suspicious, and Hagar sends for Thatah to play the moral antiseptic. Alas for poor Hagar! The Westerner, far from succumbing to this pleasant plot, falls in love with Thatah—and, what is worse, marries her! So it's back to Greenfield for Hagar. Forgiveness and reconciliation are not difficult. Greenfield, like many another such celluloid Don Juan (he wears detachable cuffs!), is a sentimentalist at bottom, and a whole archipelago of shopgirls is revenged when he finds himself heartsick for this one, and eager to get her back on any terms she offers. She nominates holy marriage by a licentiate in theology and Greenfield promptly succumbs. Thus passes Hagar Revelly from our ken. And thus passes many another like her. Do they die of delirium tremens and in the gutter, as the squeezers of tears would have us believe? A few of them, perhaps. But more of them die virtuously of the infirmities of old age, with their grandchildren folding their hands. *Eheu*, the jokes of destiny!

Dr. Goodman has a lot to learn about the art of writing. His narrative is often muddled and clumsy, and he seems to have very little feeling for the niceties of style. But through it all he keeps a pretty firm grip upon his characters, and they seldom lose the colors of life. Both Herrick and Greenfield differ enormously from the conventional seducers of romance. The former, true enough, deserts Hagar without much ado, but one somehow feels that his treason is quite natural, and even quite defensible. Such a girl is no wife for an ambitious young fellow of twenty-two; their marriage would ruin *him* without doing *her* any good. And as for Greenfield, he inspires pity more than abhorrence. He is the duellist run through at last, the Lothario snared by his own net. One imagines somewhat sadly the sixth act of his vulgar tragedy. Little Hagar will deceive him again; he will pay up, in middle age, for the misdemeanors of his youth. For there is no hint of the penitent about Hagar. She is frankly a damsel born

to the scarlet—one of the most genuine, indeed, that I have encountered in any book since "Nana." Dr. Goodman makes no effort to sentimentalize her. She is the authentic fancy woman, the deliberate merchant, the born parasite.

Next to "Hagar Revelly," the best thing in my current stock is "DEGARMO'S WIFE," a collection of three novellettes by David Graham Phillips (*Appleton*). The actual story of "Degarmo's Wife" I find rather unsatisfying: it belongs to the trade goods which Phillips had to produce to make a living. But the story of "Enid," following directly after it, is one of the best things he ever did. It is an incisive study of a discontented and vaporish wife, small in scale, but rich in detail. Enid's husband, Walter Prescott, is an honest stove manufacturer; Enid herself is a small-town intellectual, a reader of bad novels, a patroness of movements, a believer in the oversoul. But don't fancy that this warring husband and wife are mere caricatures. Far from it indeed. Prescott, for all his stove manufacturing, is a man of considerable education and capacity for reflection, and Enid, despite her flights into the empyrean, still has the saving gift of common sense. Mr. Phillips never did anything better than the dialogues between these two: the dramatic clash is tremendous, and there is even a certain phosphorescence of wit. In the end, of course, they come to a sound working agreement. Enid discovers that Walter is a good deal better than the groveling earthworm she has lately hated, and Walter begins to appreciate the solid virtues of Enid. What a pity that Phillips died so soon! Next to Dreiser, he was the best of all our younger novelists, and by long odds. He knew how to write; he thought things out for himself; he really had something to say.

The rest of the novels do not lift me to enthusiasm, though I have found several of them very readable. "THE JUDGMENT HOUSE," by Sir Gilbert Parker (*Harper*), opens in the manner of the sentimental romances of the eighties with a beauty in an opera box and a handsome and beefy young hero

admiring her. Then the scene shifts to South Africa, and we have an exciting mixture of fighting, lovemaking and diplomatic intrigue. At the end there is a glossary of Cape Dutch, wherein we learn that "alfalfa" means "lucerne." A great opera singer, Mme. Al'mah, moves magnificently across the scene. In "UNCHARTED SEAS," by Robert Adger Bowen (*Small-Maynard*), there is another opera singer, Mme. Rita Carola by name, who seeks retirement in the little Southern town of Dander-ton, and is there put to the torture by the virtuous snouters of the local Ladies' Aid Society. But despite this uncomfortable Christian endeavor, she hangs on, and toward the end it is discovered that she is really the lawful mother of Theodosia Berrisford, the town belle. On page 401 Theodosia is in the arms of Max Revell, Mme. Carola's courtly manager.

On page one of "THE MILL ON THE CREEK," by Frederick Thomas (*Broadway Pub. Co.*), I find the following curious specimen of the American language: "The party whom the voyagers comprised were three in number." Enough! . . . In "THE COURAGE OF PAULA," by Jean Noble (*same publishers*), we come upon that great rarity, a heroine who is not a beauty. When Paula Landis sweeps into a ballroom, there is no loud "buzz of admiration." The orchestra does not break down in the middle of a waltz; the waiters do not topple over like ninepins, scattering mayonnaise all over the floor; no young English marquis, dancing with Mrs. Van der Giffengiffel, the American divorcée, halts in his tracks to murmur "Bah Jove, who is that stunning girl under the potted palm?" No, poor Paula is not a Maxine Elliott. On the contrary, she is as homely as a woman politician. Her face is not her fortune, but her auction flag, her petition in bankruptcy. How to snare a man? How, in particular, to snare John Tremaine, the handsome young artist? Paula, you may be sure, is equal to the trick. She goes to a masked ball, fascinates John by her clever conversation, and accompanies him home to his studio. A row of stars . . . Paula never takes off her mask.

John never sees his son. . . . A tip to suffragettes!

In "THE DOUBLE LIFE OF MR. ALFRED BURTON" (*Little-Brown*) E. Phillips Oppenheim turns his back on his regular stock company of jewel stealers, dashing young diplomats and beautiful adventuresses, and diverts himself with a fantastic comedy. Young Mr. Burton is a real estate agent, and one day, in showing a client over a house, he happens upon a queer little potted plant bearing a tiny brown fruit. He eats some of the fruit—and thereafter he tells the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth! You can imagine the rest, of course. What is more, you have probably heard the rest. This plot, indeed, is one of the oldest known to literary archeologists. But it must be said for Mr. Oppenheim that he works it out with all his customary vivacity. As literary artist I rank him considerably below Conrad and George Moore, but as story teller he has his virtues, he has his points!

The remaining novels I must pass over very quickly. "O PIONEERS," by Willa S. Cather (*Houghton-Mifflin*), is a tale of Western Nebraska, and its principal personages are two immigrant women, a Swede and a Bohemian. The story confirms the promise of "Alexander's Bridge," which I reviewed a year or so ago. This Miss Cather, in truth, follows good models, and excellent work should come from her in future. "AMANDA OF THE MILL," by Marie Van Vorst (*Bobbs-Merrill*), is a study of Americans of a different sort—the poor whites of the South Carolina hills. A touch of conventional sentimentality is in it, but it is full of painstaking and accurate detail. "THE WHITE QUIVER," by Helen Fitzgerald Sanders (*Duffield*), is an attempt to reconstruct the life of the Piegan Indians in the days before the white man. "ISOBEL," by James Oliver Curwood (*Harper*), is another of that author's melodramatic romances of the Hudson Bay country. Finally comes "THE LADY AND THE PIRATE," by Emerson Hough (*Bobbs-Merrill*), an elaborate piece of foolery, admirable for a dull Sunday afternoon. . . . *Auf Wiedersehen!*